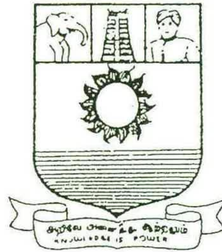
# Leadership as Propounded in *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata*

Thesis submitted to

MANONMANIAM SUNDARANAR UNIVERSITY, TIRUNELVELI,

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy



by


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**2005**

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# Certificate

This is to certify that the thesis, ***Leadership as Propounded in Tirukkural and The Mahabharata,*** submitted by the candidate **R. Natarajan**, M. A., for the Ph. D. Degree, is a *bona fide* record of his independent research under my supervision from August 2000 to February 2005, and that it has not previously formed part of the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, or any other similar title of any University or Institution.

**Tirunelveli**

Dated 13 . 4 . 2005

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# Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis ***Leadership as Propounded in Tirukkural and The Mahabharata,*** submitted to the Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, for the award of the Doctor of Philosophy in English, is my original and independent work under the guidance of **Dr. R. Balachandran**, M.A., Ph.D., Professor of English, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India. This work has not been submitted to any other University in whole or in part of a degree, diploma or a similar title.

**Tirunelveli**

Dated 13.4. 2005

R Natarajan

**R. Natarajan**

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## Acknowledgement

For permission to pursue his doctoral project as an external candidate the research scholar places on record his gratitude to the authorities of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.

He thanks profusely his guide **Dr. R. Balachandran,** Professor of English, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, for his valuable guidance and support during the last five years.

He is indebted to industrialist **Mr. Nalli Kuppuswami Chettiar** of Chennai for his munificence in enriching his home library with hundreds of new titles on Leadership and total logistics support.

**R. Natarajan**

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# Leadership as Propounded in *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata*

## · Introduction: Objectives of the Study

Management is the youngest of the pursuits in humanities; its current concern is leadership quite distinct from just managing. This topic was chosen, prompted by the recent spate of titles on leadership. This thesis - 'Leadership as propounded in *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata*' - offers the study of leadership a mentoring package from ancient Indian wisdom.

The current trend is to evaluate CEOs, not as managers, but as leaders. Hence corporate literature churns out, since 2000 AD, more titles on Leadership than on Management. The paradigm shift, from manager to the leader, is in tune with the times, when educated employees wish to be rather led than managed. Modern corporate writers consider leadership the *sine qua non* for success.

There is a call to reinterpret ancient texts under didactics, biography, philosophy, and even war strategy. This thesis seeks to trace *leadership* tenets in the 2100-year-old Tamil didactic work *Tirukkural* and the much older epic, *The Mahabharata. Tirukkural* is normative and *The Mahabharata* is normative and illustrative. The norms deduced from them are grouped and analysed for adoption and inculcation in curriculum and the society.

Considering these factors this thesis seeks to establish that (i) the ancient, normative literary works lay emphasis on a value system for men, facilitating leadership evolution, could serve as universal resource books for students of any discipline, especially those of the management, and, (ii) the ancient Indian texts *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata,* as expositions of the intrinsic values of leadership, could serve as universal pedagogic sources for leaders and leader aspirants, to draw guidance and inspiration.

# Basic Reference Texts for the Primary Sources

The following are the basic reference texts for the primary sources – *Tirukkural, The Mahabharata* and within that the *Bhagavad Gita*:

1. For reference to the Tamil text of *Tirukkural*

   Tirukural: Satguru Sivaya Subramuniaswamy, New Delhi, Abhinav Publications, 2000

2. To get at the exact meaning of some Tamil words, as in vogue during the poet's times, the reference book is

   The Concordance of Tirukkural

   By N. Subrahmanian and R. Rajalakshmi

   Ennes Publications, Madurai, 1984

3. For reference to the text of the *The Mahabharata*

   *The Mahabharata* Trans. Kisari Mohan Ganguli (12 vols.) New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, Fifth Edition, 1991

3. For reference to the text of the *Bhagavad Gita* within *The Mahabharata* the consulted work is Jack Hawley's English translation from Sanskrit

   The Bhagavad Gita, A Walkthrough for Westerners - A Guidebook for the 21st Century Mind

   Chennai, East West Books, 2001

The researcher found reputed English versions of *Tirukkural* far from the poet's intent. Most translators do not agree even on the meaning of some chapter headings. A few have rendered word for word translation, sometimes getting the word wrong; a few others, tempted to employ laboured rhymes, tagged their own words to the original. Hence the researcher, a translator himself, rendered the couplets in English, pinpointing each edict of the ethicist as a directive to leaders and leader aspirants.

# A Note on Documentation

* *Tirukkural* couplets cited have been translated by the researcher.

* Quotes from *The Mahabharata* have been extracted from the English translation of Kisari Mohan Ganguli; wherever the word Ganguli figures, it is Kisari Mohan Ganguli, the translator.

* The full name of the author of the epic, *The Mahabharata* is Krishna Dwaipayana Vyasa, mentioned here in the shortened form Vyasa.

* The full name of the author of *Tirukkural* is Tiruvalluvar, mentioned here in the shortened form Valluvar.

* Arabic numerals in brackets in *Tirukkural* section refer to chapter numbers in the listing, couplet numbers in the analytical section.

* Roman-Arabic numerals in brackets in the *Bhagavad Gita* section refer to Chapter numbers and verse numbers respectively, as in Jack Hawley's translation.

* The three stories of Bhishma given in Chapter V Section 3 are the summing up by the researcher from Ganguli's translation.

* The opening section of the Appendices gives expansions of abbreviations of publishers relating to the sections Work Cited and Appendices on books.

# Chapter I

## The Current Plight and the Call for Leadership

## Introduction to Chapter I

# The Current Plight and the Call for Leadership

This chapter has six sections (i) Call for Ideal Leadership, (ii) Revival of Interest in the Subject, (iii) Manager-Leader Paradigm Shift, (iv) Perceptions on Leadership (v) Sources for the Study, and (vi) Genesis of the Study of Leadership.

Starting from the early 20th century's political and social trends, this chapter underscores the need for effective, ethics-based leadership in all spheres including business. In support thereof the views of political philosophers, sociologists, techno-crats and corporate littérateurs besides magazine readers and editors are codified.

The post-2000 AD corporate literature's accent is on leadership. Its volley of books distinguishes the role of a leader as different from that of a manager. Hence the manager – leader paradigm shift is also discussed here. The leadership theorists call for a journey back into the past, to learn the best that could be learnt from ancient literary works as they espouse leadership's human angle more poignantly, treating all those being led as human as those who are leading.

This chapter, which explodes the myth that leaders are born, proceeds to establish that leadership quotients could be acquired through learning. Charisma is not a birth trait, but a cultivated one.

Epistemological aids imparting leadership quotients include ethical, metaphysical, philosophical and literary works, besides select works of history and biography.

When works like The Art of War by Sun Tzu apparently justifying the means to gain the ends, works that deserve consideration are ancient Indian treatises *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* as they call for the adoption of the right means to attain the ends, forbearance even to enemies, charity for all and malice to none. When Generals are invited to address corporate audience or to head business houses, as in the U.S., views of General Bhishma of *The Mahabharata,* on leadership, count all the more.

Bhishma is no theorist, but a muscular philosopher. The admirable combination in General Bhishma is his knowledge of scriptures, his sagacity, valour, resolve and commitmernt, all lending him the *locus standi* to talk at length on Leadership.

**Chapter I**

# The Current Plight and the Call for Leadership

## Section 1: A Literary Survey

This thesis attempts to derive from the two ancient Indian texts, *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata,* components of leadership for adoption in political, corporate and social realms. The researcher has selected this topic, prompted by two emerging social phenomena, (i) the media's critical articles on political leaders across the globe, and (ii) the volley of books on leadership's dimensions under corporate literature.

When politics decides all other affairs, including business, socio-political and corporate leaders, as people managing people, would gain much by imbibing the needed leadership traits. Many ancient works have marked the dimensions of leadership, long before *management* got vivisected and institutionalised. Of late management researchers have been attempting to reinvent the past, to prove that ancient texts have espoused leadership's qualities and functions prior to the term manager entering people's life or lexicon. Says Robert Allio:

> "The term leader appears in the English language in about AD 1300, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, while the term leadership appears in the 1800s. William Shakespeare, incidentally, uses the term manager in *Love's Labour Lost* in 1588." [1]

Experts have been doing research on leadership for centuries now. Yet, their findings did not appear to have prompted those in power to adopt or experiment any. Expediency counts more than anything else, especially in politics. Why so? Answers the U.S-based management consultant Keshavan Nair, who projects Mahatma Gandhi as a leader of high standard,

> "We have been led to believe that there is one standard for private morality and conduct and another for public morality and conduct. We have come to accept that a lower moral standard is necessary to get things done in the real world of politics and business...Politicians ask us to judge them on their legislative accomplishments, not on their personal conduct. Social

activists who claim the high moral ground in their personal philosophy use violence to obtain results. Business executives do not want their conduct examined but ask us instead to focus exclusively on the bottom line." [2]

Many publications, past and present, cite instances of leadership's failures and social breakdowns that leave citizens to long for the right type of leadership in all spheres, as evidenced by the following references from contemporary literature. About the mid-20th century leadership Pitirim A. Sorokin, who braved death sentence for his candid views, said caustically in his Reconstruction of Humanity,

"Bleeding from war wounds and frightened by atomic Frankenstein of destruction, humanity is desperately looking for a way out of the deathtrap. It craves life instead of inglorious death. It wants peace in place of war. It is hungry for love in lieu of hate. It aspires for order to replace disorder....During the catastrophes of this century humanity has childishly followed in this quest one leader after another and has credulously tried various plans of salvation. In vain! None of the leaders and none of the plans deliver the goods they promised."[3]

Dedicating his book of socio-political criticism '*reverentially to the deathless M.K. Gandhi*', Sorokin charges the leaders,

"Instead of peace, they have produced two world wars. Instead of happiness and plenty, they have brought mankind into an inferno of misery. These facts irretrievably condemn these leaders and their plans as dismal failures, guilty of irresponsible promises, of inability to prevent catastrophe, of ignorantly leading humanity toward destruction." [4]

Is there any way out? If so what? Sorokin answers,

"More imperatively than heretofore must it choose new leaders. And yet, observing the kinds of leaders it is choosing, one cannot refrain from gloomy forebodings. Tested by the experience of humanity, they appear to be inadequate and their plans fallacious. These blunders must be corrected before

> it is too late. Otherwise humanity is doomed to drift toward an inglorious and painful Calvary devoid of either redemption or transfiguration." [5]

Dissatisfied with most leaders of the late 20th century, Russi M. Lala, journalist and biographer, points out:

> "Many nations today suffer under leadership emerging out of the barrel of a gun. Out of 158 countries only 35 can be reckoned as free, where the rule of law and a free press can function. In varying degrees, force rather than consent, is the basis of leadership in the other 123." [6]

Corporate trainer Hilarie Owen observed in 2001,

> "The last twenty years saw a decline in trust, accountability and leadership; at the same time, there has been a rise in self-interest, greed, and dishonesty by those who exploited the culture and politics of the 1980s. The evidence of the decline is everywhere." [7]

## Public Opinion on Political Leaders

Print media has also been pointing out this rut. In November 1987, the cover story of the international magazine Time raised the question, "*Who is in charge*?" and answered that the nation called for leadership, and there was no one at home. Warren Bennis, a Leadership specialist and Advisor to four U.S. Presidents, cites this and elaborates,

> "Where have all the leaders gone? All the leaders whom we once respected are dead. Franklin D. Roosevelt, who challenged a nation to rise above fear, is gone. Churchill who demanded and got blood, sweat and tears, is gone. Schweitzer, who inspired mankind with a reverence for life from the jungles… is gone. Einstein, who gave us a sense of unity in infinity, of cosmic harmony, is gone. Gandhi, Kennedys, Martin Luther King, Jr. all were slain, almost in testimony to the mortal risk of telling us that we can be greater and better than we are. The stage is littered with fallen leaders." [8]

Closer home, replying T. K. Subramanian of Tirupparankunram, a reader, "What is the giant-size problem threatening India?" Tharasu, columnist of the Tamil weekly *Kalki*, was crisp:

"Political leaders are unfit to hold presidential posts; only when this is set right can the country solve the other problems." [9]

Here is a query to *Mangayar Malar*, a Tamil monthly from reader Ms. Shyamala Swaminathan of Tiruvananthapuram, on what is often felt as leadership failure:

> "In a bid to settle scores with an individual, Saddam Hussein, to take over oil wells, innocent persons are being killed by those coming from thousands of miles afar. Is there not anybody to question them? Is it the height of arrogance or selfishness, or the peak of the *Kali Yuga*?"

The then editor Ms. Manjula Ramesh, responded:

> "Not only the Americans, even Iraqi citizens loot the country. They swindle whatever they lay hands on. Good leaders develop good nations. It is rare to find such leaders even on a worldwide hunt. You are right; *Kali Yuga* is at its peak. Leaders stem up from the same society." [10]

This is what Warren Bennis asserts,

> "A nation can't survive without public virtue. It cannot progress without a common vision." [11]

Indian communications professional Sam Pitroda, in his recent lecture on leadership, observed:

> "Leadership in the 20th century was based more on command and control, whereas leadership in the 21st century is based more on truth."[12]

Pitroda also projected Mahatma Gandhi as role-model leader of all times because he held no government position, but dedicated his life to symblolise truth and courage.

> "Nowadays one is to act as a leader, not as a boss. There is no point in shouting orders… a proposal from a junior should not meet with a NO," [13]

says R. S. Garg, advising those who want to take their team along with them.

## Literary Assessment

Literary critic Krishna Chaitanya comments thus on the dice game, a crucial scene in the epic *The Mahabharata*, where the dice-crazy hero Yudhishtra pawns all his possessions, siblings and even his wife, falling into the villainy of his uncle Sakuni, supporting his vying cousins, Duryodhana and his 99 brothers:

"Yudhishtra was actuated by greed when he accepted the challenge to the dice game. And the way he gambled away his realm reveals that he did not at this stage realise the moral responsibilities of rulership, but regarded the state as his private property which he could dispose of, in any way he likes." [14]

Depicting the same scene with his own poetic diction, in his *Panchali Sabhadam,* Tamil poet Subramania Bharathi, laments, (as translated by the research scholar)

"Like a priest performing pujas selling the idol,
Like a gatekeeper pawning and losing the house he guards,
Dharma, albeit knowing thousands of moral codes,
Lost his country in dicing; fie with him, he acted mean
The king did not consider his citizens men like himself.
He treated his people as a herd of sheep.
Cite they a number of scriptures; yet
They have not crafted well the statecraft." [15]

While presenting the *Game of Dice* scene in *The Mahabharata,* Bharathi chides his hero Yudhishtra for having diced away his country and his wife. Yudhishtra who knew many didactic codes did not follow them. The poet observes that the rules of governance had not been properly laid down anywhere in the world. In the succeeding lines Bharathi points out:

"Nowhere in the world is governance that is impartial,
Governance that has not lost its hold on Dharma
That which does not rob the people
And that which has not plunged others into misery." [16]

Vexed by the leadership lapses the poet winds up the subject of political justice in an exasperated mood, to pick up the plot,

"All chaffy words. Let us follow the story."[17]

British philosopher Bertrand Russell, a contemporary of poet Bharathi, criticised similarly political leadership of World War I:

"We see men's political dealings with one another are based on wholly wrong ideals from continuing to be a source of suffering, devastation and sin." [18]

The present political leadership is no different from what Bharathi and Russel chastised. Of the current plight, columnist T.J.S. George wrote in _The New Indian Express_ on the Indian Independence Day of 2004,

"Louis XIV knew precisely what constituted the national interest. 'I'm the State,' he said. And that was that. That was 400 years ago. After so eventful a span of time, we would expect a less maniacal view of the state and its interests. No way." [19]

Of the far from ideal leadership of the day, rues Russi Lala,

"What our political leaders believe, and how they live, will determine their conduct, and in turn will decide the way the world goes. With the vast forces for betterment of the world available as also lethal means for its destruction, leadership is still in its primeval stage of one-upmanship, fear, jealousy, competition – emotions that threaten the future of their nations and man." [20]

At this juncture when one expects educative leadership books with political import, one is surprised at a spate of titles on leadership from the corporate sector. Why do leadership books target the corporate community and not the political one?

Five reasons are plausible: All that is to be said on socio-political leadership has been said and nothing new is to be added. There are no schools for politics proper. Elected leaders in democracy are dressed with brief little authority and are unable to have their writ run large. Corporate leaders, accountable to shareholders for launching

new products, better and more products, to increase dividends, enjoy a little more freedom than their political counterparts, whereas politicians' lack of accountability is glossed over in ornate prose in party periodicals or other outlets.

Corporate leaders struggle to cope with transition and turbulence over globalisation; they need advice all the more, and they can be takers. Hence management thinkers feel they would rather tutor the CEOs on leadership and serve the need of the times. Courtney C. Brown, Dean of Columbia University's Graduate School of Business, in his Foreword to a collection of lectures by IBM's Thomas J. Watson, Jr., states:

> "It is now a commonly accepted truism that the corporation is more than a legal entity engaged in a the production and sale of goods and services for profit. It is also the embodiment of the principles and beliefs of the men and women who give its substance. More particularly, the corporation is the expression of those who have given it leadership in its development..." [21]

Many corporate writers feel companies don't perform at their peak when their leaders remain unskilled and unwise.

With a more responsive business community, leadership has become the focus area of recent corporate literature.

People don't perform at their best when they have no leadership over their lives. Therefore, management thinkers write a volley of books on leadership, as different from those on managerial tips and some of them are very eager to point out how leadership differs from management.

Section Three of this Chapter deals with the leader-manager distinction, as perceived by corporate writers and as exemplified by Indian corporate leaders, strong in their native moorings, whose learning in native value-literature was deeper and wider than their formal institutional higher education.

This vindicates that one's basic education in values of life, learnt from native wisdom books, from parents or primary school teachers stand in good stead in one's life and career beyond and aside the formal technical, professional education.

# Chapter I

## Section 2: Revival of Interest in the Study of Leadership

Many new titles have longer, explanatory subtitles and catchy kickers on the content. As the number of titles on leadership has increased, bookshops keep separate shelves. Magazine articles also discuss leadership at length.

> "The past five years of *Time* magazine featured 1,184 articles referring to leadership, and an astounding 2309 articles that evoked the term leader," [22]

counts Robert J. Allio, management practitioner.

> "Until recently the word leadership did not feature very much in management literature. Even as late as 1988, the best selling Gower Handbook of Management (Lock, 1988) devoted only two pages to the topic in a volume of over 1200 pages, while the third edition (1992) takes a stride, doubling the coverage to four pages!" [23].

quips Philip Sadler, a specialist on Leadership. From the dawn of the industrial revolution till the best part of the bygone century, workers had to be *managed.* They were new to the jobs. The industries were also novel; entrepreneurs were quite new to the venture. Therefore, early management books provided only the tips to manage and to measure human labour and productivity by crude methodologies.

Some new books are accorded roaring reception. One is Lessons from the Top (subtitled – *The 50 Most successful Business Leaders in America and What You Can Learn from Them*) by Thomas J. Neff and James A. Citrin. The response they had had prompted them to say,

> "We were honestly overwhelmed by the positive reaction to our book…a touchstone for managers… both inside and outside the business world." [24]

The book went through nine reprints in a short span; got translated in several languages and evoked numerous radio and TV reviews. The authors, interviewed by

30 journals, did a dozen or so book signings. They led classes at Harvard and Wharton. The book influenced different types of readers.

Jack Welch, GE's renowned CEO, commended it; a school teacher who bought a copy as a gift for her brother retained when it she found it to be of interest and guidance. The same could be said of several other books on Leadership. Autobiographical works of some corporate leaders also evoke a good response among readers in business and other circles, besides the media. Lee Iacocca states that 6.5 million people bought his first book – Autobiography and as many as 71, 412 readers wrote to him about it. His response to those readers was the sequel – Talking Straight. [25]

The recent book Leadership Wisdom, with a long subtitle, *'From the Monk Who Sold Ferrari – The Eight Rituals of Visionary Leaders'*, by Robin S. Sharma, corporate trainer and author in the U.S., has run into several reprints in the U.S. and India. It follows the format of a master and disciple engaged in a discussion of the Oriental perspective of leadership along with Occidental practices. Says Sharma,

> "The sage (was) requested to share the lessons with all those in the West. It would be his duty to be the human conduit spreading it throughout this part of the world and transforming many lives. (The master) spent many years studying the fundamentals of leadership by studying the lives of great leaders. The wisdom he shared with me is based on ancient leadership truths that have been passed down through the centuries. These truths could also be characterized as immutable laws of nature; they stood the test of time and will continue to do so. [26]

Each new arrival tells something new or different on leadership. Yet, there neither is, nor could be, a single book on the gamut of leadership. With the fast changing global social milieu and complex field realities, leadership cannot be compressed into the cameo of a single book. Still, there is a ceaseless attempt to grasp the dimensions of leadership. As related by Robin Sharma, an executive has reportedly said,

> "First of all what does the word leadership really mean? What does it really stand for? Though I am running a huge company with more than 2500 employees, I have never really been able to pinpoint the meaning of the word." [27]

## Crash Courses Do Not A Leader Make

The more is said on leadership, the more remains to be said. A. W. Verity, English literary critic, who edited Shakespeare's *Hamlet* asserted,

"The chemistry of criticism has evolved no Hamlet formula." [28]

*A la* Verity, be it said,

'The chemistry of management has evolved no leadership formula yet.'

With the finale on leadership not having been said, it is still an exploration; at least as regards management books in English are concerned.

Besides hundreds of new titles, mostly of the tips type, there are umpteen training courses offering limited help. Of the fad for fast-food type of books Robert Allio says,

> "Unfortunately the current literature does disservice to practicing managers and aspiring leaders by encouraging a simplistic approach to effective leadership – *'Here is a vision,' Walk the talk'* and the like. Or it misrepresents the development process to improve the skills – Spend a week at the Instant Leadership program." [29]

True, leadership development is not like bodybuilding exercise at a gymnasium, a mechanical instrument-supported exercise unto oneself. It is a leader's preparing his career for others. As Abraham Zalesnik observed in a conference,

> "A leader is more interested in what events and decisions mean to people. Then he is in his own role in getting things accomplished ...a potential leader will achieve his ambitions... what he achieves will benefit the world..." [30]

However time-tested treatises have their own relevance on learning leadership's quotients. Hence the ancient Indian texts *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* are taken up for discussion here as source material shedding light on leadership.

The two texts under primary sources of this thesis are introduced in Chapter II.

Chapter I

# Section 3: The Manager - The Leader: Paradigm Shift

Looking at new titles on leadership one is led to feel that most of them are rehashed works of psychology, self-improvement and managerial tactics. Researchers John H. Zenger and Joseph Folkman claim that their book The Extraordinary Leader is different from the rest. They add,

> "It becomes apparent to any one who reads a number of books on leadership, that over 90 percent of what you read has been said before. Packaging is different, the examples are amusing, but, fundamentally, there is nothing new." [31]

In Harvard Business Review's 1998 anthology on Leadership prominent authors address the questions: Who is a manager? Who is a leader? Whether *leader* and *manager* are interchangeable terms? Whether the leader is to shoulder more duties and responsibilities than a manager? Is the leader a promotee from the managerial echelons? Leadership and management are held as the two sides of the same coin. Are the roles mutually exclusive? The loaded one-liner of John P. Kotter:

> "Most U.S. corporations today are over-managed and under-led." [32]

However, managers are not to be undermined. Zalesnik avers that businesses need managers and leaders to survive and to succeed. Adds Kotter,

> "Management controls people by pushing them in the right direction; leadership motivates them by satisfying basic human needs."[33]

Managers control; leaders explore. Leaders motivate the employees and enhance their self-esteem. Author Abraham Zalesnik says Leadership requires using power to influence the thoughts and actions of other people. To Zalesnik the manager is a problem solver. For a leader, he says,

> "It takes neither genius nor heroism to be a manager, but rather persistence, tough-mindedness, hard work, intelligence, analytical ability, and perhaps most important, tolerance and goodwill." [34]

Zalesnik identifies empathy as a key trait that distinguishes a leader from the manager. He points out,

> "Empathy is not a matter of paying attention to other people. It is also the capacity to take in emotional signals and make them meaningful..." [35]

Warren Bennis, a leadership specialist distinguishes leaders from managers succinctly thus in his On Becoming a Leader: [36]

* The manager administers, the leader innovates.
* The manager is a copy, the leader is an original.
* The manager maintains, the leader develops.
* The manager focuses on systems and structure; the leader on people.
* The manager relies on control; the leader inspires trust.
* The manager has a short-range view; the leader has a long-range perspective.
* The manager asks how and when, the leader asks what and why.
* The manager has his eye always on the bottom line; the leader has his eye on the horizon.
* The manager imitates, the leader originates.
* The manager accepts the *status quo*, the leader challenges it.
* The manager is a classic good soldier; the leader is his own person.
* The manager does things right; the leader does the right thing.

This distinction reflects the role and responsibilities of a leader *vis-à-vis* a manager. Two Indian instances, one metaphysical and the other corporate, pinpointing the difference between leader-manager, are worth recalling.

If the war of Kurukshetra, presented in *The Mahabharata* is an allegory, then Lord Krishna is the leader and Arjuna is manager. The manager is obliged to do what is ordained; the leader knows why. In the battlefield of life, God is the leader, man is manager and the manager should know well-done jobs take care of the results. Here is a corporate instance of leader-manager syndrome:

"Though qualified as a chartered accountant, P.L. Tandon began work with Hindustan Lever in the area of marketing and retired as the Chairman of this multinational firm. A few years after his retirement, he was invited by R.K. Hazari, Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, to take over as Chairman and Managing Director of the Punjab National Bank. He replied, "Ravi, I don't know banking." Hazari was one of the most successful Deputy Governors who made a big difference. He knew Tandon well enough to respond appropriately, "Prakash, I don't want you to do banking there. The second man is good enough to do that. The bank has virtually no system; I want you to install good systems there.'...He (Tandon) completed the task within the planned time frame; went to see the Finance Minister a few days before his term expired, and said, 'My term with the Punjab National Bank is coming to its end.' The minister snapped, 'We are considering an extension for you.' The reply was quick, 'I was given a job; it has been finished. As part of my professional duty, I only came to suggest a name for my successor,' and walked out." [37]

This instance cited by Sampat P. Singh, brings to light the following:

(i) Bureaucrat Hazari had the talent-spotting quality in him. He spotted and deployed talent – P.L. Tandon. Above all he knew the difference between the manager and the leader.

(ii) P.L. Tandon discharged his duties of a leader as expected, but declined the fruits thereof, even when offered. He had the sense of renunciation defined in the *Bhagavad Gita,* renunciation *in* work and not renunciation *of* work. As Lord Krishna advises, he did his 'professional duty' and did not expect any reward, even an extended term of office. He proved himself to be a worthy leader, with as much detachment and commitment.

(iii) P.L. Tandon had no ego that he was the bank or the bank was his and he did not feel that after him there would be the deluge.

(iv) He was eager to create a leader behind him; he expressed it to the minister.

(Note: P.L. Tandon passed away very recently)

This unique status of leadership emanates from the fact that managers create only managers, while leaders create followers as well as leaders. That is the greatness of leadership. In the corporate sector, early entrepreneurs donned the mantle of managers-cum-leaders. During the expansion stage leadership responsibilities did not allow them to devote enough time to attend to managerial work. Then they appointed managers. Subsequent stages demanded directional guidance; then they installed team-leaders. Be it noted that some recent advertisements invite applications for the positions of team-leaders.

**Command and Control**

The old control and command system still stays but its application is different nowadays. That is why some retired Army chiefs became U.S. Presidents and a few later took over as corporate CEOs. Retired Generals are invited for lectures at reputed management institutes. Exposing the ancient Asian wisdom Ong Hean-Tat, Yap Sin-Tian and Takashi Kawatani, state,

> "General Schwarzkoff, who commanded the U.S. Army's attack on Iraq during the Gulf war, was sought after as a speaker in some American firms after he retired from the Army. The executives wanted to know how military strategies could be used to gain a winning edge in today's global complex business." [38]

Americans are eager to learn management from The Art of War, a 2500 year old book on war strategy by Sun Tsu, China's warrior philosopher. Seagraves says,

"The Japanese say politics is business and business is politics. If the market place is a battleground, requiring strategy and tactics, then Sun Tsu wrote the Bible." [39]

"The essentials of Sun Tsu's wisdom can be captured in 10 short principles," says Donald G. Krause, interpreting the Art of War for executives. They are: [40]

1. Learn to fight
2. Show the way
3. Do it right
4. Know the facts

5. Expect the worst
6. Seize the day
7. Burn the bridges
8. Do it better
9. Pull together
10. Keep them guessing

Modern executives or 'corporate warriors' as some prefer to call them, read avidly books written by or written on retired Generals. Three deserve mention here: (i) Wisdom of the Generals – From Adversity to Success and from Fear to Victory by William A. Cohen, retired Major General of USAFR, and, (ii) Patton on Leadership – *Strategic Lessons for Corporate Warfare* by Alan Axelrod. (iii) The Leadership Secrets of Collin Powell. In his Foreword to the book of leadership lessons from Gen. Patton, Major General Cohen states,

> "No less a management thinker than Peter Drucker wrote almost half-century ago, that the first systematic book on leadership, written more than 2000 years ago by Xenophon, was still the best. Xenophon was a Greek General and his writings concerned combat leadership." [41]

War literature of the past and the present portray Generals as leaders. One such is General Bhishma, the pivotal character of the Indian epic *The Mahabharata,* which predates Xenophon by about 3000 years, or even more. Bhishma was a warrior of different mettle. He headed a large army; was fatally injured in the crucial Kurukshetra war. Well trained in martial arts, a leader and trainer himself, Bhishma was erudite in scriptures too. His sermon on statecraft to be analysed in this thesis commands universal applicability.

An acclaimed leader of brain and brawn, Bhishma was duly equipped to speak authoritatively on leadership. Hence *The Mahabharata* is taken as one of the primary sources for research on leadership; along with it *Tirukkural* that lays emphasis on military strategy as part of leadership, as the leader in the past was political, the king.

# Chapter I

# Section 4: Leadership as Espoused by Authors

When leadership is stressed so much, to the one eager to learn much of it, three epistemological sources are available: (i) *Conceptual* - Books on leadership (ii) *Observational,* Books on leaders (iii) *Empirical,* Books by leaders - autobiographical. To grasp Leadership's dimensions phrases have been culled out from the works of 50 writers and practitioners, 50 recent and important titles and interviews of 50 documented global CEOs. (The sources are furnished in Appendix No: 5 Page xiii)

The first category covers books by Warren Bennis, John Adair and others. Books by John Neff and Citrin Lessons from the Top, Carol Kennedy's Sainsbury, John Lewis and Cadbury belong to the second; those by Lee Iacocca, Rudolf Guiliani, Jack Welch and Sam Walton form the third type.

## Conceptual

Conceptualist John C Maxwell, lists 17 traits of leadership: [42] adaptability, collaboration, commitment, communication, competence, dependability, discipline, expansion, enthusiasm, intentions, mission-consciousness, preparedness, relationship, selflessness, self-improvement, solution-orientedness and tenacity. Carolyn Barker and Robin Coy, scholars of Australian Institute of Management list seven: [43] Compassion, Courage, Humility, Humour, Integrity, Passion and Wisdom. Peter Urs Bender lists [44] knowledge, vision, passion, risk-taking, communication and checking results. Warren Bennis, an authority on leadership concurs with all of them.

## Observational

R. M. Lala lists [45] communication, compassion, competence, courage, decision-making, humility, integrity, purpose, stamina, personnel manage-ment, teamwork, training and vision. Rozer Fisher and Allen Sharp call for five quotients: [46] purpose, thinking, learning, engagement and feedback. Anup J Singh and Daisy Chauhan mention: [47] development, empowerment, team and organisation building. Dayle M.

Smith mentions of [48] control, relationship and encouragement. Power, self-interest, virtue and private morality are the duties, [49] according to Joanne B. Ciulla. Jane C. Ward, Andrea Bacon, Rosie Mackie define the crucial role of emotional intelligence of leaders in a competitive world. [50] Vasant K. Saraf lists ten: Purity, Non-Violence, Rectitude, Steadfastness, Fortitude, Renunciation, Accommodation, Equanimity and Contentment [51] Many rarely touch the last said component.

Daniel Diehl and Mark P. Donnelly cite history as a source to learn on leadership. They cite religious leaders, philosophers, kings, despots, pirates, prophets, statesmen and industrialists. John Adair reverts to history and literature and attempts to orient contemporary leaders to the world of idealism of the past. J. M. Burns, oft-quoted author on leadership, presents personalities like Mahatma Gandhi as leaders who changed the contemporary thought and activities.

In his book Thought Leaders: The Source Code of Exceptional Managers and Entrepreneurs, management counsellor, Shrinivas Pandit, portrays 22 corporate heads and spots 12 leadership traits that are common. They are: Commitment, Persistence, difference, curiosity, persuasiveness, risk-taking, focus, values, high energy, learning, humility and listening. He adds he is not exact or exhaustive in defining leadership but has only given the lead words, which encompass many associated traits.

According to Srinivas Pandit [52] *Commitment* could refer to drive, dedication, passion, obsessions and zeal. Commitment generates energy, because the self merges in action, and action leads to friction, and friction to energy.

> *Persistence* could also mean doggedness, determination, hard work, insistence and tenacity. Difference is distinctiveness, differentiation, positive attitude, personality, innovativeness and talent.
>
> *Curiosity* covers intelligence, creativity, clarity of thought, kaleidoscope thinking and originality.
> *Persuasiveness* is the communications quotient spanning negotiation and presentation skills and influencing.

*Risk-taking* is entrepreneurship, taking on responsibility and being accountable for results, experimenting without fear of failure, learning from mistakes, without thinking they are fatal and creating by trial and error.

*Focus* includes zeroing in, concentration and goal-orientation.

*Values* include honesty, integrity, honouring commitments, keeping one's word, truthfulness and independence.

*High energy* is spiritedness besides stamina, because of intense involvement in the task at hand 'doing' things in conceptualising and getting interested in the work itself.

*Learning* annexes knowledge, skill through proper study and experience. The result of learning is modification in behaviour, approach, attitude and perspective.

*Humility* is ego in check, modesty and unpretentiousness.

Listening is being open-minded, firm, but not obstinate or obdurate.

While the above extracts cover myriad facets of leadership, they do not exhaust all the dimensions of leadership.

## Empirical

Three reputed U.S. CEOs, cited by Neff and Citrin, practice leadership thus:

Frank Raines of Fannie Mae is a very good communicator. He influences his audience over the processes of decision-making, directly or indirectly. He expects leaders to clarify their mission internally and communicate their objectives to the rest of the world. His strength: Focusing and communicating. [53]

Herb Kelleher of Southwest Airlines holds that leadership is servanthood. He prefers leadership by example. He believes in adaptability and demonstration of sincerity, which should come from the heart rather than the head. [54]

Passionate, goal-focused, good at perfect timing, and delegating authority, CEO Charles Schwab aligns his company's goals with client's goals. His advice:

Successful CEOs have been incredibly passionate. Without that quality, one cannot possibly be a leader. [55]

Based on their experience, this is what 50 corporate chiefs, including the above three in the U.S., note as qualities of leadership.

> Adaptability, avoiding complacency and arrogance, being competitive, being courteous, being humble, being passionate, being quick, beliefs and values to inspire people, bravery as to not to cave in, change, choosing right time, choosing to follow and not lead, cleanliness, collect details, courage, decentralisation, decision-making, delegating, delegating authority, demonstrating, demonstrating the ability to make judgements, developing, development within, drawing on resources, energy, enjoying the job, establishing trust, exhorting, facilitating internal communication, faith, fixing priorities, focus on their strength, giving them flexibility to decide, guiding, having no complacency, high standards, home-work, honesty, innovation, integrity, intellect, intensity, knowing people, lead by example, leading without panic, listening and understanding them, manage priorities, not those who do not, not to focus on others' weaknesses, loving assignments, passion, planning and execution, precision, providing strategy and motivation, quality, realising leadership is the way one needs to go on his own, recruiting the best people, responsibility, rewarding those who perform, right attitude, ruthless about discipline, sense of urgency, sensitising, setting examples, skill, staying focused, sticking to ethics, strategy, supporting, taking care of employees, talking straight, to pay credit where it is due, track record, training, trust, understanding them to take decisions, values, vision, walk with employees to find much less resistance, what gets measured gets done, what matters is the right perspective and willingness to work.

(Presented in Appendix No: **5** on Page **xii** are the CEOs, their leadership styles and their advice to leader aspirants.)

# Chapter I

## Section 5: Leadership - Epistemological Sources

Leadership is what has been said in the previous section and much more. Attempts to study leadership takes one to ancient literary works, which speak more of leaders than of managers. Books like Leading – Lessons From Literature by Sampat P Singh, an Indian consultant and author, could be of help. He presents numerous examples and anecdotes in this direction.

Whatever be the type of books, could leadership be taught? Allio, Sadler and others strike a paradox that leadership cannot be taught though it could be learnt. They are right because the grasping quotient is not the same with everyone, despite the teachers having the same IQ. The authors explode the myth that leaders are born. The London Business School exhorted the potential students to "enroll as a manager and emerge as a leader!" in its insertion in the Sept.1998 issue of *The Economist*.

> "In reality, these are abilities harder to acquire... Leadership cannot be taught, though it can be learned by developing certain qualities and refining one's core leadership skills. But it does not happen overnight and certainly, not at a leadership seminar," says Allio. [56]

The corporate sector's thrust from manager to the leader has prompted business schools to start courses on leadership. Harvard Business School, the oldest in the world, incepted in 1906, started only in 1995 its MBA (Leadership and Learning) programme with a focus on values and qualities, besides skills and knowledge, to 'achieve a partial shift in emphasis towards developing business leaders,' notes consultant Sampat P. Singh. [57]

As classrooms have limitations, Hilarie Owen, a leadership expert, says,

> "Learning techniques may allow an individual to become a better manager, but leadership is more about taking an inward journey and finding your own strengths and leadership gifts." [58]

Philip Sadler also accepts sources prompting inward journey for lessons on leadership. He says,

> "Bennis and Nanus have also identified commonly believed myths surrounding leadership. *Leadership is a rare skill.* Untrue. While great leaders may be rare, everyone has leadership potential. *Leaders are born, not made.* Not so. The truth is that major capacities and competencies of leadership can be learned, and we are capable of learning, given the will to learn." [59] (emphasis added)

If leadership lessons could be learned, what are the sources? R. M. Lala, biographer, executive and journalist, recommends biography. Says he:

> "Men study for five years and more to qualify to be doctors or engineers. But no preparation is deemed necessary for men to assume command of nations. It is time schools and universities undertook a study of leadership through the medium of history and biography." [60]

Philip Sadler who accepts biography to a limited extent, rejects autobiographies, accounts of consultants and practitioners as products of bias or excesses, saying,

> "Biographical studies can be expected to be more illuminating than leaders' own account... if they are not tinged with hero worship." [61]

Of the limitations of biographies, Robert J. Allio notes,

> "We have seen countless biographies of leaders and empirical studies of leadership, but curiously enough, few have defined the conditions that produce leadership or qualities and skills that effective leaders must possess." [62]

Some management experts accept history as a source. Hilarie Owen recommends,

> "An unusual journey back into the far distant past where we see the foundations and the beginnings of organisations." [63]

British consultants Daniel Diehl and Mark P. Donnelly, who train executives and script the serials for television, assert,

> "It is probably fair to say that over 8,000 years of human civilisation every conceivable management technique has been tried, probably more than once...the logical place to look for the broadest possible variety of tried and true managerial styles is in the dusty pages of history." [64]

Australian writer James Sarros accepts this and cites Latemore and Callan,

> "This form of post-industrial leadership is not new after all. ...the origins of this type of leadership are found in antiquity; without the emergence of leadership as a type of social institution, civilization may not have been possible." [65]

Reminding the adage, two is a company, three is a crowd, Warren Bennis says,

> "One person can live on a desert island without leadership. Two people, if they are compatible, could probably get along and even progress. If there are three or more some one has to take the lead; Otherwise chaos erupts." [66]

The progress of civilisation implies that there had been leadership in the remote past. As leadership had been behind the strongly built social institutions, it is worthwhile to study its aspects. Experts suggest literature, biographies and history as sources for leadership lessons. Reads the blurb of the book <u>How Did They Manage? Leadership Secrets From History:</u>

> "Most of us think of business management as a phenomenon of the modern age. Nothing could be farther from truth. For as along as people have lived, worked, fought, played and prayed together, there has been a need for a strong leadership and people management skills. Throughout history leaders have achieved success through time-tested managerial techniques." [67]

In reading historical and biographical texts one should sift panegyrics, stuff with bias and hypes. Chroniclers and image-builders eagerly push under the carpet some unsavoury aspects of leaders of the past. Morgen Witzel, revealing some untold truths on Henry Ford, exposes him in his <u>Fifty Key Figures in Management</u>:

"There were two sides to Henry Ford and any appreciation of him needs to look at both. The American entrepreneurial genius, who revolutionised American culture and lifestyles, was the instigator of a dehumanising deskilling system. His admirers included Vladimir I. Lenin who instructed *Pravda* to serialise his books. His detractors included Aldous Huxley whose characters in the novel Brave New World pray to 'Our Ford' rather than 'Our Lord.' Even the most sympathetic observer has difficulty in reconciling the enlightened employer and talented engineer who designed the Model T and built the Highland Park production plant with the paranoid bitter old man who neglected his company, hired mafia thugs to beat up employees and if witnesses are to be believed, drove his only son into an early grave." [68]

If books on personalities are to be set aside as image-building exercises, works of literature help those seeking lessons on leadership, as they present good and bad traits of leaders in fictional format. But literary critics write about characters, reading too much into the text, to display their erudition and analytical skills. It is, after all, a literary exercise, not a leadership study.

Robin Sharma recommends,

"Books will keep you connected to the fundamental leadership principles that all too often get forgotten in the crush of daily activities. Books allow you to look deeply into the minds of the greatest men and women who have ever lived. By investing the few hours it takes to read the autobiography of Gandhi or the biography of Churchill, you will learn leadership lessons that it took them decades to discover. You will come to understand that the principles they followed as well as the solutions they discovered to many of the most common leadership problems. By reading from books on executive effectiveness and personal mastery, you will find time-honoured way to get more done in less time. And by reading the great works of philosophy and consistently exposing your mind to the great thinkers you will come to understand the ageless laws of nature and humanity. Start spending some of your day with the greatest people who ever lived by spending some time with the books they have written. How would you

like to have Ben Franklin, Thomas Edison or Alexander Graham Bell mentoring you on the fundamentals of creative thinking and innovation... There is such wisdom in the great books of literature and yet most people seem to be too busy to discover it. And so they continue to make mistakes both in their leadership and in their lives, mistakes that could so easily have been prevented, had they taken a few hours out of their weeks to read deeply." [69]

Leadership quotients cannot be acquired from the external sources as one builds his wardrobe by spending money or asking somebody to buy for him garments. They have to be ingrained in one's psyche as he develops his personality from his formative period.

Philip Sadler identifies five sources for leadership lessons.

(i) academic research

(ii) podium speakers

(iii) consultants

(iv) practitioners and

(v) summarisers, who respond to the other four.

He perceives academic research lacking practical bearings; academics are inexperienced on the podium; consultants are closer to problems, but lack aptitude for research; practitioners write their own experience, but selectively and less objectively; biographies border on hero worship. Sadler recognises only summarisers as those who present what is to be learned from external sources. He does not consider literature as a potent source. Says he,

"The literature on leadership is more extensive than impressive. It contains more in the way of myth and legend than fact or substance. A great deal of common sense dressed up as theories, as well as theories which defy common sense." [70]

On the other hand Paul Corrigan who holds that Shakespeare has lessons of leadership for today's managers, says,

"Management literature over the last 40 years has emphasized the importance of leadership. Book after book argues that without leadership managers and organisations will fail, and that it is this quality that is missing from the day today work of real managers...Yet leadership is not something that has only developed in the last 40 years. Shakespeare demonstrated very different ways in which leadership could be provided. Between them his plays are a master class of what leaders should and should not do." [71]

Adds Corrigan,

"Perhaps, to some, the similarity between Shakespeare's stories and modern management issues will come as a surprise. But there are a number of strong bridges between his time and ours...In Shakespeare's time the 'senior manager' was called a 'leader,' whose job was to lead a nation, a clan or a country. Leaders were also called kings, queens, dukes or lords. Then, as of now, organisations needed leaders; managers either led or failed; and leaders had to worry about managing with limited resources. Good leaders managed their staff well and bad ones badly or not at all. Good managers understood the vital need for information and bad ones ignored it, feeling that communication with subordinates was not necessary." [72]

The 400-year-old Shakespeare bears relevance even now; so too his illustrious contemporaries. Works older by several millennia are the primary sources for this research *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata;* one speaks of ideologies, another speaks of ideologies and presents instances of leadership's failures and successes.

Of the much older ones, says Sampat P. Singh,

"There is another interesting way of looking at leadership. A good example is Sun Tzu's Art of War written more than 2500 years ago in China. Its English translation is now considered a seminal work on the philosophy of successful leadership and as applicable to contemporary business as it is to war...Sun Tzu

was inclined to justify all means - deception, bribery, spying and so on. For him all means were justified to achieve ends...It has been written that Sun Tzu's book on the Art of War had been translated into French and was read by Napoleon, and that he followed many of its tenets. Napoleon's winning card was always the element of surprise." [73]

Singh speaks of Machiavelli's The Prince published in the medieval times:

"It is used even today as an important book on leadership. He advocated that all means are justified to achieve the end. But he did not advocate leaders to act immorally. He only emphasized the inefficacy of acting morally in an immoral world." [74]

Adds Singh, advocating the need to stick to ethics with regard to means also,

"Ethics lays down the norms for good behaviour, by distinguishing between virtues and vices. They not only govern interpersonal relationships, but also organisational and social relationships. Values and ethics are closely related. Further the distinction between principles and practices in ethics is important." [75]

Such constant values have been espoused in books of the past and they are recommended for in-depth study by writers who plead for keeping in tact with the moorings of the past while working out the vistas of future. They hailed ancient works not with the blind belief that 'old is gold' but they do believe that ancient works of values touch upon the unchanging fundamental nature of man and time-tested truths. That is why they are relevant even now.

Had Philip Sadler and his ilk been introduced properly to such books, especially ancient Indian works like *Tirukkural* in Tamil and *The Mahabharata* in Sanskrit, they would not have rejected literature summarily as a pedagogic source for leadership.

This thesis seeks to prove that literature could be an effective pedagogic source to impart and imbibe lessons on leadership; among other sources *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* claim attention because of their normative nature.

# Chapter I

## Section 6: Genesis of the Study of Leadership

Though the study of man is as old as philosophy or literature, study of leadership has acquired more importance from the time political science branched off as a separate discipline. Most hero-hailing ancient works across the globe could be taken as leadership expositions through literary format.

However, a study of *the man in the leader* is a recent trend in corporate literature. Leadership research came to be pursued as a separate discipline, distinct from management, since mere management was felt inadequate to run institutions usefully and profitably. Leadership remained a socio-political phenomenon in the books of history till the corporate sector redeemed it to the world of business at the close of the 20th century. India's analysis of leadership is as old as her epics.

Literary works had dealt with it. For centuries scholars had written on leadership. Studying the traits of leaders - social, political, and literary - fictional and historical. Western corporate world started tracing the evolution of leadership recently. The purpose is to re-orient business on proper leadership. A study of leadership thus becomes imperative within and beyond management's domain.

Says G. D. Sharma, former professor of management of the Rajasthan University,

> "Leadership is a widely researched and discussed subject in the Western management literature. It has passed through at least five distinct phases of development." [76]

He identifies those five stages as,

(i) the great man theory,

(ii) the trait theory,

(iii) the team player theory,

(iv) the situational or contingency theory, and

(v) the path goal theory.

Familiarisation with the theories of the history of leadership, initiated by the corporate sector, helps one understand its dimensions.

The first stage of the history of leadership presumed that all leaders were born, not made. The next was to identify qualities which made one a leader. The third was an approach toward the leader's handling his people, making him a team player, not a monolith. At the next stage a leader was viewed as a product of his times and situations, so engrossed in the contingencies of immediacy, rendering him lose their vision for future.

The first four stages are just halts on the passage of Time. Leaders respond to their times, with skills they could muster, to tide over a crisis of a situation or its aftermath. The fifth stage is not the culmination of the other four, though it is closer to the management jargon's **MBO** - Management By Objectives. As setting examples is ideal, the goal path, could be enlightened further, to be called **MBE**, Management By Example.

No less a person than Collin Powell, till recently U.S. Secretary of State, after a long and distinguished stint as a General, has stated,

> "You can issue all the memos and give all the motivational speeches you want, but if the rest of the people in your organisation don't see you putting forth your best effort every single day, they won't either." [77]

Collin Powell was to have run for the U.S. Presidency; he did not.

The distinguished U.S. President, Theodore Roosevelt, felt that even the members of a leader's family should set examples. He upbraided his daughter for her smoking and other challenges to convention:

> "In your present position your example might be one for good; at least you need not make it one for evil" [78]

Such a role model leadership is depicted in the normative *Tirukkural* and the normative and illustrative epic, *The Mahabharata.* Hence the demonstrated leadership traits from the above two works will help leaders and leader aspirants.

# Summary of Chapter I

## Call for Leadership in Corporate Literature: A Survey

Citing nearly forty authors and a handful of journalists this chapter underscores the need for the right type of leadership in all spheres under the current dispensation. The spate of books on the subject under corporate literature, since 1995, especially after 2000 AD reveals the acute awareness of leadership in the management sector.

Even the celebrated B-Schools in the U.S. focused on leadership only at the fag end of the 20th century. The trend is to differentiate between managing and leading.

Thinkers agree that leaders are not born and leadership lessons could be learned. Quotients of leadership are listed from three important sources, compilations of quotes, books on leaders and books by leaders.

Western perspectives are provided through fifty reputed CEOs of U.S. based multinational companies, as interviewed by writers and headhunters, Neff and Citrin. The Indian leadership perspective is given through a similar research-based book by Management consultant Srinivas Pandit, covering 22 Indian business leaders.

Writers on the subject suggest a journey back into the past to imbibe leadership components. They suggest studying history and biography. Therein some rightly sound a note of caution that panegyrics passing for biographies be avoided, as they might be exaggerations glossing over shortcomings.

To gain the right perspective for leadership, to govern the affairs of the society, one should develop Management by Example (MBE) along with Management by Objectives (MBO). A leader's exemplary behaviour matters most. Managers, leaders and leader aspirants are expected to take lessons from the right epistemological sources, wherein figure the ancient books of wisdom.

Among the ancient works those of didactic nature and universal appeal could be of help. In this context Tamil text *Tirukkural* and the much older Sanskrit epic *The Mahabharata* deserve reinterpretation from leadership perspectives, as they are time-tested universal pedagogic sources, teaching the nuances of leadership.

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# Chapter II

## Introducing the Primary Sources

# Introduction to Chapter II

# Introducing the Primary Sources

This Chapter has three sections introducing the Primary Sources as pedagogic tools teaching the nuances of leadership.

The first introduces the normative, secular and didactic Tamil text *Tirukkural* and the second *The Mahabharata* in Sanskrit, one of the two Indian epics - the other being *Ramayana.* The third points out the common ethical edifice of the two works.

Written by Tiruvalluvar about 2100 years old *Tirukkural* comprises three books, Virtue, Wealth and Pleasure (Love Life). The 1330 couplets are set in 133 chapters, ten couplets each.

*The Mahabharata* predates *Tirukkural* by several centuries. With about 200,000 lines in 18 Cantos this epic illustrates, as flashback, the intrigues between the warring first cousins over governance of the country.

Though scholars debate over the date of composition, the works are assignable undoubtedly to the BC millennia. One of the common factors is their concern for leadership, specifically the man in the leader as the *sine qua non.*

The works prompt men to take an inward journey to plan their growth. All good things, which go into the making of an individual, start from the family, they assert.

Analysing the components in no unmistaken terms the works hold that man is the measure, to lead and to be led. They prescribe norms for ideal manhood and ideal leadership, one leading on to the other for universal good. They insist that wealth should be gained only by the righteous means.

This Chapter also presents comments of scholars, Indian and overseas, who edited the works besides the views of some of the delegates who presented papers on *The Mahabharata* at *Sahitya Akademi's* international seminar in New Delhi in April 2004.

With 20 quotes from each text the third section reflcts the shared ethical edifice.

## Chapter II

# Section 1: Introduction to *Tirukkural*

*Tirukkural*, a secular work in Tamil language is 21 centuries old. While the epic *The Mahabharata* is prefixed with the definite article 'the', *Tirukkural* is mentioned just as such, because *Tiru* is an honorific in Tamil that goes with great persons, great places and great works Viz. *Tiru*-moolar Tiru-Valluvar (names of poets) *Tiru*-nelveli. *Tiru*-vaarur (names of places) *Tiru*-Arutpa, Tiru-Vachakam and *Tiru*-kural (works).

*Kural* is a two-line metrical verse in Tamil, like the English couplet. Going by the Indian school of philosophy *Tirukkural* deals with values of life in its three books Aram, Porul and Inbam, (*Dharma, Artha* and *Kama* in Sanskrit) Virtue, Wealth and Love, respectively. The three books of *Tirukkural*, with 1330 couplets, set in 133 chapters, prescribes norms for a good man, a good minister and a good king in its 1080 couplets of the first two books - *Aram* and *Porul* – Virtue and Wealth. The couplets define the nature and functions of men, kings, ministers, subtleties of diplomacy, mind-reading, judgment, public presentations and a lot more. They also list the cultivable qualities for kings and leaders. The leaders are obliged to look inward; yet the external factors that guide them have also been dealt with.

There is no demarction as to where the internal quotients stop and where the external ones start. Valluvar is a poet of synthesis, not of dissection, implying that internal unction renders external excellence possible. However, the impact of the man in a leader is crucial. The fall of the man in a leader is the fall in his leadership. Hence what happens to the leader, as an individual matters. In tune thereof, the focus of this thesis is: – Set the man right, the world will be all right.

Alagappa Rammohan, publisher of an international edition of *Tirukkural*, gives a recent count of translations of *Tirukkural* thus[1]: English 36, (starting from Kindersley in 1784 to Sivaya Subramuniaswamy in 1999) Malayalam 8, Telugu 8, French 7, Hindi 4, German 3, Sanskrit 3, Latin 2, Kannada 2, and one each in Sinhalese, Russian, Urdu, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, Malay, Burmese, Fiji, Chinese, Dutch, Spanish and Swedish.1

Professors of History N. Subrahmanian and R. Rajalakshmi prepared a useful concordance for *Tirukkural*, long before computers entered the academia. In their erudite introduction to that researchers' ready reckoner, Concordance of Tirukkural, they state,

> "The *Kural* is a very important Tamil text dealing with moral philosophy as applied to *ideal* situations. It is very important, not only because of its textual excellence and its unique place in Tamil literature, but also because of its immense impact it has had on later Tamil literature and the socially consequent hindsights it has given to influential dabblers in Tamil sociology in recent times...Valluvar omits religion from his purview; gives secondary consideration to the state and the government; but primarily deals with man in his personal and social relations in *Arattuppal,* (The first book Virtue) and with a special aspect of such personal morals in *Kamattuppal* (The third book - Love) ...The *Kural* is a string of dos and don'ts, good advice (mixed with persuasion and occasional admonition) and bland statements of proverbial wisdom. All these look like a list of injunctions, duties to be performed. There is no mention of rights..." [2]

The American Hindu monk Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, who commissioned a lucid translation of *Tirukkural* in American English, spelt Tirukural, has observed,

> "The chapter structure and the sequence are well thought out. Tiruvalluvar chose a topic and gave us ten different couplets on one subject. To properly understand this perspective, all the ten couplets must be read, for, they are like facets of a gem, each reflecting the light of his understanding, slightly differently and the richness of his comprehensions. In the opening few verses he tends to focus on the subject at hand, while moving in the latter verses into more specific matters." [3]

All couplets assay what is ideal manhood in edict-like brevity. A man true to himself shall be true to others; that is *Tirukkural's* key message. Scholars across the world have underscored this.

Who did Tiruvalluvar, the author of Tirukural; have in mind when he wrote the Kural? The king? The minister? The citizen? The lad? The lass? The wife? The husband? The mother? The father? The son? The teacher? The pupil? The thief? The spy? The addict? The gambler? The saint? He keeps in mind almost all those who form the society. As Prof. K. Kunjunni Raja observes,

"The emphasis is on the individual rather than on society." [4]

Sivaya Subramuniyaswami further asserts,

"I found it (*Kural*) one of the most important scriptures in all of Asia, so enchanting and so very practical. It contains wondrously no-nonsense insights on life, teaching us how to deal with the various feelings and circumstances that we encounter in our internal life and our interactions with others....*Tirukural* is the most accessible and relevant sacred text I know, applying to every day matters and common concerns. Like the Buddha and *Bhagavad Gita,* the *Kural* desires inner freedom from the world and a mind free from hatred. You find the quintessence of the best gems of thought in *Kural*, a living ethic of love and liberation. Indeed, many claim that *Tirukural* is man's earliest statement of the ostensibly contemporary ecumenical tenants, for, it is free of dogmatic bias that commonly attends religious scriptures." [5]

Adds the monk,

"The father of modern India, Mahatma Gandhi took to these verses in his own spiritual life, telling his pupil, 'only a few of us know the name Tiruvalluvar. The north Indians do not know the name of the great saint, there is none who has given such a treasure of wisdom like him.' [6]

Rev. Xavier Thani Nayagam of Sri Lanka has said,

"The ancient literature in Tamil provides useful data for an inquiry into the origins and sociological development of education within a culture complex. It is a very valuable corpus for the study of ancient India, because Tamil literature is predominantly secular." [7]

Western humanist Albert Schweitzer says,

"With sure strokes, the *Kural* draws the ideal of simple ethical humanity. On the most varied questions concerning the conduct of man to himself and to the world … there hardly exists a collection of maxims in which we find such lofty wisdom." [8]

K. M. Munshi states in his Foreword to Rajaji's translation of *Tirukkural*,

"In its essence *Tirukkural* is a treatise par excellence on the art of living. Tiruvalluvar diagnoses the intricacies of human nature with such penetrating insights, perfect mastery and consummate skill absorbing the most subtle (sic) concepts of modern psychology that one is left wondering at his sweep and depth. His prescriptions, leavened by godliness, ethics, morality and humaneness are sagacious and practical to the core. They cut across castes, creeds, climes and ages and have a freshness, which makes one feel as if they are meant for the present times. No wonder that the *Kural* has continued to attract the best minds down the ages. Gandhiji is known to have delved deep into its wisdom. Vinobaji is an acknowledged student of this classic." [9]

Rajaji in his Preface adds,

"Tiruvalluvar was one of those rare and great men whose catholic spirit rose above all denominations and whose vision was not clouded by dogma or prejudice of any kind. Tiruvalluvar's approach to moral doctrine is marked by a very thorough knowledge of human psychology. Throughout we can see how the poet brings everything down to the level of practicality without losing hold of the ideal. The second book of *Kural* has 70 chapters on purity in worldly affairs including statecraft, full of interest for the scholar and the historian. The chapters are not addressed only to princes and those around them. They contain principles of conduct that should guide all…." [10]

Educationist V.C. Kulandaiswamy observes,

"Valluvar lived and wrote in the age of the bullock cart: He lived at a time when monarchy was the only form of civilized government…Can a book written at a time when education was meant only for a few, when kings enjoyed unlimited

powers, have any relevance in an age when man-made satellites are in the orbit?"[11]

From Mu. Varadarajan to V. Sp. Manickam and Sp. Annamalai, eminent Tamil Professors, have come out with their ethical and literary studies. These annotated editions of *Tirukkural* facilitate easy understanding. They have their own merits.

Although scholars have occasionally held *Tirukkural* as a management manual, they were pleased with just citing a few couplets in their articles or random orations. Of the very few books linking *Tirukkural* with management, three deserve mention:

(i) *Management Philosophy of Tiruvalluvar in Public Administration* by Agamudai Nambi[12]

(ii) *Management Mantras from Tirukkural* by S.M. Veerappan and T. Srinivasan.[13] and

(iii) *Tirukkural and Modern Management* by Sundara Srinivasan[14]

The first is different from normal literary criticism; the second opens with communication nuances wherein are discussed Time Management, managing the boss, moulding of an executive, planning, developing core competence, trusting and entrusting.

The authors of the second book, an illustrated one, employ modern managerial idiom. The third is a bilingual work offering some interesting insights.

When *Kural* moves over thus from the den of literary criticism, pure and simple, to the applied aspects, especially in the realm of management, more works of in-depth analysis would come up. That in turn, depends on

(i) proliferation of literary scholars cum professional managers, and

(ii) efforts to take literary works to the schools of management.

This thesis is an attempt in this direction, with specific reference to leadership quotients in *Tirukkural*.

**Chapter II**

# Section 2: Introduction to the *The Mahabharata*

The date of *Tirukkural*, as consensus with Tamil scholars, is 100 BC. Experts differ on the date of *The Mahabharata*. Anita Chakravarty, writing on the *Gita*, fixes the date of the Kurukshetra war, the epic's climax, to 1000 BC. Krishna Chaitanya, a literary critic familiar with Western and Indian literary texts, subscribes to Robert Minor's date of the *Bhagavad Gita* circa 150 BC, though he dismisses the latter's contention that the *Gita* was a later addition to the epic. Krishna Chaitanya holds the *Gita* an integral part of the epic. Whatever be the dates, it is certain that these texts were written when monarchy was the form of government. When no explicit democracy was in vogue, authors Tiruvalluvar and Vyasa breathed the spirit of democracy with the conviction that man is the measure to lead and to be led. They laid an ethical edifice, holding the individual at the nucleus of the society. That is their undisputed major premise in explicating leadership quotients.

Woven around numerous intriguing, interlinked episodes, portraying the characters in conflict, war-centric Indian epic, *The Mahabharata* in Sanskrit, prescribes the ethical pursuit of Wealth and Pleasure. With 96,635 stanzas under 2382 chapters in 18 books, it is known to be the world's oldest literary work in the narrative format, with the largest cast of characters.

> "With its 18 *Parvas*, 1200 chapters, and 200,000 lines of verse, *The Mahabharata* is eight times as long as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* put together, longer than the united extent of all the epic poems in European languages and three and a half times the Bible,"[15]

notes Krishna Chaitanya who has dedicated his book on *The Mahabharata* to the European scholar Philip Glass.

"It is the mightiest single endeavour of literary creation of any culture in human history, *The Mahabharata* is unique in many respects. As an epic, it is the greatest and the grandest, animating the heart of India and destined to lead humanity for

thousands of years in future," [16] say the publishers of Kisari Mohan Ganguli's 12-volume English translation of *The Mahabharata.*

As of most other epics, *The Mahabharata* is not a single hero-centric epic. It reflects the mind of a nation. Kodandaramayya cites Shri Aurobindo,

> "...The whole poem has been built like a vast national temple un-rolling slowly its immense and complex idea from chamber to chamber crowded with significant groups and sculptures and inscriptions."[17]

Annie Besant notes,

> "It teaches everybody. It teaches children, boys and girls, men and women, and it teaches them what to do at each part of life....*The Mahabharata* lays great stress on this relation between conduct and position."[18]

*The Mahabharata* is

'*Sastra* (scripture) and a *Kavya* (epic)' notes scholar S. Ram Mohan. [19]

> 'To view it as a work of political structuring aimed at bringing about socio-political order and administering propriety is the most profitable reading,'

says Prafulla Kumar Mohanty. [20]

K. M. Munshi who launched Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's publications, with *The Mahabharata* of Rajaji, former Governor General of India, says,

> "*The Mahabharata* is not a mere epic. It is a romance, telling the tale of heroic men and women; some who were divine; it is a whole literature in itself, containing a code of life; a philosophy of social and ethical relations and speculative thought on human problems." [21]

Says Rajaji,

> "Its gospel of *dharma,* which like a golden thread runs through all the complex movements, that hatred breeds hatred, that covetousness and violence

lead inevitably to ruin, that the only real conquest is the battle against one's own lower nature." [22]

Subash Mazumdar, an epic enthusiast, who has served the United Nations in many parts of the world, says,

> "I believe it (*The Mahabharata*) is essentially factual...not just a story or a mythology but a social history of our ancestors... It portrays succinctly the moral and ethical values of people who lived at that time. It described clearly how people behaved under stress – some righteously and valiantly; some ignominiously and in a dastardly manner; while some being unable to take a decision merely abstained from action." [23]

In his forthcoming book, The Mahabharata - An Inquiry in the Human Condition, Chaturvedi Badrinath [24] lists 18 traits that mark the epic both normative and illustrative. They are:

> "Self-understanding in concrete situations, consonance between particular and universal, attributes of a happy person as definitions, concepts shown as relational, inter-personal relationships, neither neglect or idolatry of any human attribute, the universality of virtues, ethical cannon in all judgments, paradoxical situations, emancipation, *moksha,* as rising above, time-specific contrary desires, conflict between right and wrong and also between right and right, philosophical debates start from personal angle and proceed to universal, the debating methodology of interaction, the importance to time and place for historicity, speech being central in all discussions, the intellectual and spiritual role of women as teachers."

The epic has meaningfully enchanted a number of scholars abroad.

Author MacDonald lauds it 'an encyclopaedia of moral teaching.' [25]

To Winter Nitz it is not an epic or a poem, but 'rather a whole literature.' [26]

Hermann Oldenberge could sense, "In *The Mahabharata* breathe the united soul of India and the individual soul of her people." [27]

"If I were to confine for life to a single book, I would certainly choose *The Mahabharata,"* Arthur William Ryder has said. [28]

Peter Hill who took the epic as mankind under the clutches of Fate says,

"*The Mahabharata* was not a purely religious work, nor an epic in the Homeric sense, nor a romance, nor a philosophical treatise, although it did contain all these forms and much more." [29]

What Hill calls 'more' is approached here from the management angle through a study of leadership lessons contained therein.

To Juan Miguel de Mora of Mexico *The Mahabharata* is,

> "*The Mahabharata* is a gigantic torrent of life and thought, of action and meditation, of images and examples, and, of principles. The *Mahabharata* transcends, in every aspect, the frontiers of India, (with its) delicate ambivalence, true to reality, in presenting all aspects, the nuances and forms of human life. It deals with good and evil, but a profound character analysis...it is not a question of placing the bad on one side and the good on the other. The 'good' are not so good and they are far from perfect. And the bad are not absolutely bad." [30]

In her book of leadership-based quotes from the epic, bereft of contextual references, Meera Uberoi, says,

> "Sun Tzu wrote his classic about two thousand years ago, Machiavilli in the 15th century and Mushashi in the 17th century.*The Mahabharata* predates them. It is pragmatic, clear-sighted philosophy crosses barriers of epoch and culture." [31]

The epic's large canvas, numerous personae in conflicting circumstances, pointed and illuminating debates and sermons have elicited this spectrum of laudatory opinion from domestic and foreign scholars. Each is right in his/her observation. But there is something more than all that has been said as above. *The Mahabharata* is, in deed, a study of leadership from its failure to success, failure in personality traits causing a chain of failures in public affairs, and success through catharsis, atonement and forbearance, as is to be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

## Chapter II

# Section 3: Common concerns of the Primary Sources

One familiar with *Tirukkural*, as he goes through *Vidura Niti*, Bhishma's *Raja Niti* and *Bhagavad Gita* will be surprised to find striking similarities in views and metaphors regarding statements on life and ethical ways. As this research is only on leadership in both the works, no attempt is made here for a literary study comparative philosophy. Anyone who takes up a close scrutiny will have a rewarding experience.

*The Mahabharata* is several centuries older; it was part of India's oral traditions presumably long before *Tirukkural* was written. Given the plausible theory that some ancient Tamil veterans were well-versed in Sanskrit too because of the cultural cohesion of those days, there is every reason to believe that Tiruvalluvar, author of *Tirukkural*, was quite familiar with the epic as a literary and philosophical work. The epic did provide him inspiration. The theory that Tiruvalluvar might have influenced by views and metaphors of Vyasa on life and concepts of man, might not be palatable to the post-Independent politically influenced, emotionally surcharged, indoctrinated lingual chauvinists. Still it is worthwhile to look at the striking similarities.

A sample list of 20 quotes from *The Mahabharata* as in Janaki Abhishekhi's book Tales and Teachings from The Mahabharat (1998) [32] and comparative Kural couplets presents the common ethical edifice of the two authors. *The Mahabharata* is quoted first. Numerals within brackets for the quotes from it refer to the Parva number, the surga number and the verse number in that order given by Janaki Abhishekhi. *Kural* couplets, with their numbers, are italicized and right aligned to mark the difference,

1. *Ahimsa* (non-violence) and truthful speech are the dharma that do (sic) good to the world. *Ahimsa* is the highest *dharma,* and it resides in truth. (3.198.69)

*Truthfulness is avoiding harmful words." (291)*

2. All *asramas* survive on the householder just as all survive on the mother. (12.261.6)

*A householder shall support those of the other three orders – bachelors, quasi-ascetics and ascetics. (41)*

3. Only that which is done according to dharma can bring happiness. Wealth is superficial. (12.283.55)

   *Happiness is what comes through virtue; the rest are aside; they lack glory. (41)*

4. He who drinks real *amrit* (the elixir of immortality) is the one who eats only after the family, servants and guests have eaten. (12.214. 10,11,12,13)

   *Don't take even the life-giving elixir, keeping aside the guests. (82)*

5. Knowledge (Jnana) helps to discriminate between good and bad and adopt the right course. (12.194.13)

   *"Wisdom will harness the mind, diverting one from the wrong path and directing him toward the right." (422)*

6. Look favourably on a guest, see to his needs, speak sweetly truthfully and sincerely when he departs go with his a little way and pay attention to him. (13. 7.12)

   *The one who sees off departing guests awaits arriving ones is heaven's guest. (86)*

7. Wealth obtained by fair means gives much better fruits than giving *daan* for food or performances of many *yagnas*. (14.93.76)

   *Wealth with the right persons is a fruit-bearing tree of common reach (216)*

8. Just as a well is hidden by grass so the immoral take their guise of dharma and break the limits of decent behaviour. (13.147.11)

   *The wicked look like good people; the like of which we have not seen. (1071)*

9. He who has realised the Self can never be subdued by anyone. (14.19.23) Only he is called a man who...is free of ego and pride (13.134.13)

   *'The one free from ego shall gain everything here and in heaven.' (346)*

10. He who gets an animal for killing, he who kills, who sells, who trades in it, who cooks it and enjoys it are all violent.(13.116.47)

    *If none buys, none in the world would sell meet. (266)*

11. To be steeped in Vedic knowledge and being fair with all beings are both regarded as equal. Straightforwardness is more important. (13.130.29)

    The *wise are the righteous, treating all living beings equally. (30)*

12. First the mind must be free of violence and then speech and deed. (13.115.8)

*A pure mind is everything of virtue; all else is nothing. (34)*

13. Merely washing the body with water cannot be called a bath. He ...who has kept his sense organs under control...has had a bath. (13.111.9)

*Water cleans body; truth cleans the mind. (298)*

14. Do not criticise those defective in body, the fat, the old...(13.107.59)

*Don't ridicule men by their stature; they are like axle-pin upon which mighty wheels of a chariot spin. (667)*

15. A guest should never be insulted and spoken to angrily. (13.62.11,12,13)

*Virtue is receiving pleasantly, looking kindly and speaking pleasantly. (93l)*

16. Non-violence towards all beings, giving oneself to all, self-control, renunciation, steadfastness and truth are what will bear fruit. (13.59.8)

*Enduring pain, not injuring others are the traits of penance. (261)*

17. Just as weeds are bad for crops, so are the wicked among men. (12.174.7)

*The king punishing criminals is like de-weeding the fertile fields. (550)*

18. Charity becomes flawed when there is no discrimination between the deserving and the undeserving.(12.20.9)

*The help is rated not in itself but by the worth of the recipient. (105)*

19. The best medicine of sorrow is not to dwell on. It only increases sorrow. (11.2.17)

*Least bothersome, least worrisome. (341)*

20. The ruler who extracts more taxes than that accepted by the *shastras* harasses the subjects and invited his won destruction. (12.72.15)

*The tears of the oppressed barrage and sap the king's treasury. (555)*

A lot more comparative statements could be ferreted from the primary sources. They mainly cover the first two of the three ordained pursuits of humanity - Virtue and Wealth and Pleasure. Leadership is also built on what is said on the first two.

# Summary of Chapter II

## Introduction to the Primary Sources

The above Chapter has introduced the two ancient Indian texts *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* as expositions of leadership, among the other man-making values.

As acknowledged by scholars, *Tirukkural* is an extraordinary work on the art of living, delving deep into the unshifting foundations of human nature. It provides guidelines, not for the society in general but for individuals – the ascetic, the family member, the father, the son, the monarch, the minister, the ambassador and in general to everyone in society who hold responsibilities unto themselves and to others.

*The Mahabharata,* being an epic is a string of integral stories under a master plot. Though not entirely factual, as contended by some, it is not altogether fictional. Fiction or history, taken of just what is being said, the epic portrays succinctly the moral values of the then society. It describes clearly how people behaved under stress – some righteously and valiantly; some ignominiously and in dastardly manner; some who were unable to take decisions and so merely abstained from action.

Both the texts share the common ethical edifice of the Indian polity that Wealth and Pleasure, the twin ends of life, should be earned only through Virtue. The authors discuss various components of leadership and statecraft upon this major premise that the means matter in realising the ends.

A random selection of twenty quotes present the authors on the same wavelength.

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# Chapter III

## Leadership as Propounded in *Tirukkural*

# Introduction to Chapter III

## Leadership as Propounded in *Tirukkural*

This Chapter on *Tirukkural* presents in three sections (i) The text's structure, (ii) Each of the 108 Chapters as a directive to leadership and (iii) Interpretation of the couplets of the 108 Chapters as bearings on the quotients of leadership.

The thematic unity is that a good man makes a good leader. For that purpose the 108 Chapters of the first two books - *Aram* and *Porul* are divided into *Qualities* and *Functions* which are subdivided into Qualities of the *Heart* and Qualities of the *Head;* the Functions are subdivided into *Transparent* and *Discreet.*

The quotients of leadership are discussed by interpreting the couplets under five major divisions *Qualities* - cultivable and eschewable, *Functions* - cultivable and eschewable and the *Communication* components. By amalgamating the key quotients along with the traditional Indian divisions of personality components – *Thought, Word* and *Deed* the profile of an ideal leader is constructed.

American Hindu monk Sivaya Subramuniaswami did not translate the third book Love Life; understandable in that he was a monk. But even C. Rajagopalachari a householder, despite ascetic disposition, did not translate any couplet from the third book. Writers and speakers who occasionally make superficial statements on the management lessons in *Tirukkural* quote a few couplets from the second Book Wealth do not refer to the third book Love Life with the same verve. They are eager to laud it as an exquisite piece of romance. So it is; but it also inculcates a personal quotient of leadership binding a leader, as a spouse, to be loving, loyal and dutiful.

Though only the first two books of *Tirukkural* Virtue and Wealth are analysed here to trace the components of leadership, the researcher places on record that the third book also wields a pertinent, though indirect influence on shaping a leader's personality by honing sensibilities as a spouse of marital fidelity; the lack of which leads to infamy - that has been the focal point of legends, myths, epics and history.

## **Chapter III** Section 1

# The Structure of *Tirukkural*

The 1330 couplets of *Tirukkural* are set in three books, Virtue, Wealth and Love; each book has its subdivisions; the chapters are 133, each chapter has ten couplets.

> "The occurrence of political ideas in the *Porutpal* (Book II Wealth) and the mention of the eternal duties of man as a householder and as an ascetic in the *Arattuppal* (Book I Virtue) are complementary and provide a complete code of ideal behaviour, personal as well as ...social and public," [1] authors of a Concordance to *Tirukkural* N. Subrahmanian and R. Rajalakshmi point out.

That leadership is elucidated only in the first two books of *Tirukkural* is a limited reading of the text. Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, being a monk, did not translate the third book of *Tirukkural*. It is unfortunate that even C. Rajagopalachari, (Rajaji) who was a householder omitted the book altogether when he translated over 500 couplets into English. The third book should not be relegated because it deals with just love life, a personal quotient. It has its bearings on leadership. To be reckoned is the third book, as the leader is expected to cultivate abiding love and affection to the spouse. Ideological conundrums apart, be it noted that modern perception wants a leader to be a man first, biding within moral codes. The morals cover his marital life also.

Valluvar and Vyasa forbid extra-marital links. As the Tamil words *Kaamam* and *Inbam* came to acquire erotic connotations due to the quirks of semantics over a passage of time the third book of *Tirukkural* has not been interpreted properly. By *Kaamam* Valluvar meant love, pure love. Clandestine relationships have spoilt the name of some leaders, who had otherwise been achievers. If only they had been so stuck to the spouse by such bonds of love and affection as portrayed by Valluvar in his third book, none would err.

The cementing love life between man and woman is discussed when a leader is profiled by Valluvar's norms at the end of this chapter. Misunderstanding with the spouse, irritable temper displayed at home and office out of that, the tendency to outstrip the marital confines, the disrepute born of it are to be avoided.

**Chapter divisions in *Tirukkural***

**Book I: Virtue - Section I *Aram***

*Aram* opens with four chapters: Praising God, Importance of Rain, Greatness of Renunciation and Asserting Virtue's Power.

**Section II *Illaraviyal*** (Domestic life) has 20 chapters:

Family life, The good wife, Children, Love, Hospitality, Pleasant words, Gratitude, Impartiality, Self-control, Virtuous conduct, Not coveting another man's wife, Forbearance, Avoiding Envy, Covetousness, Back-biting, Vain talk, Dread of guilt, Understanding the duty to give, Charity and Glory.

**Section III *Thuravaraviyal*** The Way of Renunciation

This section *Thuravaraviyal* (Renunciation) has 13 chapters. Compassion, Abstaining from meat, Austerity, Deceptive conduct, Avoiding Fraudulence, Anger, Injuring others, Non-killing - Truthfulness, Impermanence of things, Renunciation, Knowledge of truth and Eradication of desire.

**Section IV: *Oozh*** Destiny

This section has its lone chapter *Oozh* (Destiny) to imply the weight and import of the subject. However the poet is of opinion that daring and devoted human efforts can prevail over destiny. Leaders facing crises should note this.

**Book II: Wealth Section V: Royalty**

This section has 25 Chapters: Merits of the king, Learning, Neglect of learning, Learning by listening, Wisdom, Guarding against faults, Gaining support from the great, Avoidance of base company, Deliberating before acting, Understanding strength, Understanding the time factor, Understanding the right place, Testing and trusting men, Testing and employing men, Fellowship of kindred, Avoiding forgetfulness, Just reign, Unjust reign, Avoidance of tyranny, Compassion, Espionage, Industriousness, Avoidance of laziness, Perseverance and Being undaunted by troubles.

**Section VI : Ministers**

The ten adjuncts of a government and ways of handling them as discussed here are: Ministers, Eloquence, Purity of action, Resoluteness of action, Modes of action, Envoys, Associating with monarchs, Discerning unspoken thoughts, Judging the audience and Not dreading the audience.

**Section VII : Defence**

A country's nature and security are discussed in this section, called *Araniyal* in Tamil. They are: *The Nation* and *The Fortress.*

**Section VIII Creation of Wealth**

Called ***Koozhiyal*** this section has its solitary chapter on creation of wealth - The ways of acquiring wealth.

**Section IX The brigade**

This section on military prowess deals with security matters - *Merits of the Army* and *Martial pride.*

**Section X Friendliness**

The section ***natpiyal*** provides in 17 chapters: Friendship, Testing fitness of friendship, Taking liberties, Harmful friendship, False friendship, Folly, Ignorance, Hatred, Merits of enmity, Understanding the nature of enmity, Internal enmity, Not offending the great, Being led by women, Avoiding harlots, Avoiding liquor, Gambling and Medicine.

**Section XI : Qualities of a Leader**

The concluding section ***Kudiyiyal*** (citizenry) implies that a leader cannot be different from his citizens and that he does not enjoy special privileges, though he occupies an exalted position. The 13 Chapters are: Nobility, Honor, Greatness, Perfect goodness, Possession of courtesy, Wealth that benefits no one, Possession of modesty, Advancing the community, Farming, Poverty, Begging, Dread of begging and Baseness.

**Book III Love**

"The second division is nearly twice as much as the first, perhaps because of the author's desire to apply the principles of ethics as structured by him to the secular concerns of the man. This is further reinforced by the subdivision on the householder far exceeding in number of verses that on the recluse." [2]

The third book of Love Life has 25 chapters. In the recent past the Tamil words *Kaamam* and *Inbam* have acquired despicable connotations. But Valluvar did not mean anything mean as the two words connote now. They are not covered here individually. But the sum total deserves consideration. "Within the third division the subdivision on wedded life far exceeds that on premarital love." [3]

The third book's couplets assay the intimacy between the lad and the lass - how one waits for the other; how one longs to see the other; how one foregoes food upon separation, how one interprets the other's words, the silence and even the sneeze.

Indian psyche takes sneeze a telepathic signal. The lad sneezes, just to draw her; the lass asks, 'Who is behind the sneeze, when I'm right before you?' (Kural 1317)

And there are other couplets too, portraying the intimacy between the couple. The lad says, he remembered her; the lass retorts, "When did you forget?" (Kural 1316)

The lass says she does not take anything hot, as it might hurt the lad within. The lass wonders, "He on my shoulders while asleep (in dream) now that I'm awake he has gone into my heart." (Kural 1218)

The lad too exclaims, "From whence did she get the fire, that scorches me when I'm farther; that comforts me in proximity." (Kural 1104)

If matrimony could be a magic in one's life as in the third book, one would naturally respect the two taboos of the primary sources, not to covet another's wife and hunting for harlots. That depends upon the leader's bonds of love with the spouse. The other Indian epic *Ramayana,* which is beyond the purview of this research succinctly puts it - king Ravana, for all his prowess and exquisite mastery over music fell by that one vice – the lust for Rama's wife – Sita.

## Chapter III

# Section 2: *Tirukkural*: Directives to Leadership

The 108 chapters of *Aram* and *Porul* are divided as: Qualities of Heart 25, Qualities of Head 48, Transparent Functions - 25, and Discreet Functions - 10.

**Qualities of Heart**

The following 25 chapters refer to cultivable qualities of Heart, presented here as directives and explained further. (Numbers in brackets refer to chapters of *Tirukkural*)

1. Lead a clean married life. (5)
2. Be a good spouse. (6)
3. Be blessed with children and bring them up well. (7)
4. Be an embodiment of love. (8)
5. Be hospitable. (9)
6. Always speak pleasantly. (10)
7. Ever be grateful. (11)
8. Be impartial to everybody. (12)
9. Be modest. (13)
10. Conduct yourself in an ideal manner. (14)
11. One with extra-marital links sets a bad example. (15)
12. Forbearance elicits regrets, not retaliation. (16)
13. Envy ruins the one who harbours it. (17)
14. To give others whatever possible is one's duty. (22)
15. Compassionate man has harmony and understanding. (25)
16. Be vegetarian and revere the animal kingdom. (26)
17. Foster the kith and kin (don't be nepotistic). (53)
18. Be compassionate. (58)
19. Friendliness matters most. (79)
20. Never hate anybody; hatred is a disease. (86)
21. Never lose thyself to any feminine charm. (91)

22. Keep away from harlots. (92)
23. Be honourable under all circumstances. (97)
24. Be courteous at any stage. (100)
23. Be modest; the humble inherit everything. (102)

**Qualities of Head**

The 48 chapters, on the qualities of head, are listed here as directives.

1. Realise God and be submissive, first of all. (1)
2. Help get due rainfall to sustain economic growth. (2)
3. Cultivate detachment and impart it to others. (3)
4. Follow the path of virtue. (4)
5. Control temper for positive response from others. (13)
6. To covet is to invite canker and ruin. (18)
7. One who does backbiting could as well be its own victim. (19)
8. One should be wary of doing anything sinful. (21)
9. Never try to rob somebody's wealth. (29)
10. Truthfulness ensures other virtues; gains respect. (30)
11. An angry man loses much in life; besides the goodwill of others. (31)
12. Realise the transient nature of life; remain modest. (34)
13. Detachment is not renunciation *of* action, but renunciation *in* action. (35)
14. A leader should be a seeker of truth. (36)
15. A leader should eschew desires that destroy. (37)
16. A leader who dares destiny wins. (38)
17. A leader must learn; there is no end to it. (40)
18. Stopping learning leaves one's growth stunted. (41)
19. Listening helps learning; let it be cultivated. (42)
20. To be wise is the profit of all learning. (43)
21. Know your strength, exactly to its capacity. (48)
22. Strike at the opportune time; never be hasty. (49)
23. Choose the place to strike; never get caught. (50)
24. Keep a retentive memory. (54)
25. Be industrious. (60)

26. Never be lazy. (61)
27. Perseverance pays. (62)
28. Brave the troubles. (63)
29. Be eloquent. (65)
30. Know how to move with rulers. (70)
31. Be alacritous to discern intents from the faces and moves. (71)
32. Judge the audience before you face them. (72)
33. Never dread the audience; be prepared. (73)
34. Evaluate before befriending any. (80)
35. Don't take undue liberties even with familiar ones. (81)
36. Beware of harmful friendship. (82)
37. Avoid unbecoming friendship. (83)
38. Practice what you preach. (84)
39. Ignorance is penury. (85)
40. Assess the full strength of enemies. (87)
41. Try to go at the root of hostility. (88)
42. Beware of the enemies within. (89)
43. Never gamble. (94)
44. Be health conscious. (95)
45. Foster citizens (96)
46. Be a man of just pride. (98)
47. Be erudite. (99)
48. Differentiate good people from the bad who look alike. (108)

**Transparent Functions**

Where a leader shall be transparent are listed hereunder:

1. Charitable mind and charitable hand help the society grow. (23)
2. One who wants a glorious life will not resort to anything mean. (24)
3. Simple living gains respect; do not be ostentatious. (27)
4. Be straightforward; never be conceited. (28)
5. Don't cause injury, mental or physical, except in penal action. (32)
6. Non-violence is a virtue with leadership. (33)

7. Sovereignty, the rule of law, must be respected. (39)
8. A leader should behave without being faulted. (44)
9. To be guided by elders would be gainful. (45)
10. The company matters; avoid base people. (46)
11. Be just in all your activities. (55)
12. Never be unjust in your administration (56)
13. Discriminate the good and bad in what you rule. (57)
14. Keep the right minister for wise counsel. (64)
15. Be pure in what you do. (66)
16. The country is what the ruler makes it. (74)
17. Gain wealth by the right means. (76)
18. Never offend the great. (90)
19. Do not take liquor; it unsettles. (93)
20. Find the right uses for wealth. (101)
21. Work for the growth of the society. (103)
22. Attend to the basic need of man – food. (104)
23. Alleviate poverty. (105)
24. Eradicate begging altogether. (106)
25. The leader shall dread the plight of citizens driven to begging. (107)

**Discreet Functions**

The ten chapters on discreet the functions of a leader are listed here.

1. Never plunge into action without pondering over. (47)
2. Test the persons before you deploy them. (51)
3. Deliberate before acting. (52)
4. Gather intelligence through spies. (59)
5. Be resolute in whatever you do. (67)
6. Know how to perform; the methods are important. (68)
7. Employ the right type of envoys and stand to gain. (69)
8. Be fortified, externally and internally. (75)
9. Maintain the army's majesty. (77)
10. The command strength is the matter of pride. (78)

Tiruvalluvar's directives for leaders are discussed in the subsequent sections. The listed quotients are grouped into the following manner: (i) Qualities, cultivable, (ii) Qualities eschewable, (iii) Functions, cultivable (iv) Functions, eschewable, besides (v) Communication quotients

(i) **Cultivable Qualities (Thought-based)**

1. Be a worthy father and a worthy son
2. Be the right spouse
3. Be an embodiment of love
4. Foster kith and kin
5. Be health conscious
6. Have a pure mind
7. Curb your desires
8. Control yourself
9. Control the five senses
10. Have good demeanour
11. Have patience
12. Identify with all around
13. Be compassionate
14. Be resolute
15. Be wise
16. Preserve honour
17. Beware of being caught by shame
18. Set your targets high
19. May your learning stand by you
20. Let not anyone around you neglect learning
21. Be truthful in thought, word and deed
22. Think before you act
23. Note what to avoid
24. Evaluate and cultivate friendship
25. Don't incur the wrath of great men

26. Know the etiquette
27. Read the mind on the face
28. Assess your friends
29. Know your strength
30. Give no room for folly, within or around
31. Be fortified internally to tackle enemies
32. Understand the nature of enmity
33. Hitch your wagon to glory
34. Focus, meditate and envision
35. Know your duties
36. Be eco-conscious for the common good
37. Beware of the enemy within
38. Don't be deluded by illusions
39. Realise the transient nature of the world
40. Dare destiny

**(ii) Eschewable Qualities (Thought-based)**

1. Don't be ego-conscious
2. Cast away all desires
3. Avoid jealousy
4. Eschew hatred
5. Never be angry
6. Don't entertain even the thought of thieving
7. Don't covet somebody's wife
8. Don't be led by women (?)
9. Keep away from harlots

**Cultivable Deeds (thought-based)**

1. Be kindly disposed to everyone
2. Be courteous
3. Be sensitive to the nuances of hospitality
4. Be grateful
5. Gain support of the great

6. To be good is to be dutiful
7. May you ever be noble
8. Be an impartial judge
9. Know the goals
10. Aim anything big and gain
11. Be just in your administration
12. Be alacritous
13. Be pro-active
14. Be pure in action
15. Be methodical
16. Be alive to the time factor
17. Don't procrastinate
18. Be enthusiastic
19. Persevere
20. Stay within limits
21. Be generous, but note the limits
22. Boulders do not a fort make
23. Imbibe the spirit of a warrior
24. Note the importance of the location
25. In recruiting look into the antecedents, investigate
26. Deploy upon merits
27. Protect the personnel, by being idealistic
28. Empower the staff
29. Don't interfere
30. Don't be confounded by appearances/first impressions
31. Don't be carried away by pretenders
32. Let not familiarity prompt you to take undue liberties
33. Dare distress
34. Never say no
35. Know what a country is made of
36. Gather intelligence

37. Know the nuances of diplomacy
38. Know the ways of acquiring wealth
39. Be generous in apportioning wealth
40. Strive for society's progress

**(iv) Eshewables Deeds (Thought-based)**

1. Don't be indolent
2. Dread evil deeds
3. Don't perpetrate evil
4. Don't offend the great
5. Keep ignoramuses away
6. Beware of bad friends
7. Avoid improper conduct
8. Guard against faults
9. Never gamble
10. Avoid liquor
11. Avoid base company
12. Avoid slander
13. Don't kill any, for any gain
14. Abstain from eating meat
15. Don't terrorise
16. Don't amass wealth that benefits none
17. Never be unjust

**(v) Communication Quotients (Word-based)**

1. May your expressions reveal you
2. Be sweet-tongued
3. Be eloquent
4. Judge the audience
5. Don't dread the audience
6. Scan the information and respond
7. Be an avid listener

## Chapter III

# Section 3: The Man Behind the Leader: Kural's Edicts

Quotients under *Qualities*-Head and Heart, *Functions* - Open and Discreet contribute to the thought process and lend meaning to life. The then Indian tradition enjoined on the householder, head of the family, *leader-micro*, the responsibility to acquire wealth by right means and to spend it on self and others including bachelors (students) outside the family fold also and ascetics.

Noteworthy is the sequence of topics in the book *Aram* on the stages in a man's life, where he is advised to lead a good family life, be blessed with good wife and good children. He is expected to love them, love others, be hospitable, speak pleasantly, be grateful, be impartial, have self-control, be virtuous, be faithful to the spouse, have forbearance, avoid envy, avoid covetousness, avoid back-biting and avoid pointless speech, to dread guilt, to cultivate charity and to obtain glory.

**Family's influence**

Valluvar addresses the individuals as he opens his work. His starting point is home. He asserts that leadership starts at home.

Across the world and closer home many examples prove that behind the success of every leader is a woman; could be mother, could be sister, could be wife. In rare instances men are found to be behind the success of women. During his formative stages man's family atmosphere forms his frame of mind. Thought process and the ways of expressions and actions conform to one's family background. The family is expected to provide wards a congenial atmosphere for proper growth. It all starts with one being a good man, a good husband and a good father.

**1. Be a worthy father and a worthy son**

"The father's duty is to project his son as *prima donna* in assemblies." (67)

Of all his ordained duties, the father is obliged to be a mentor to his son, to groom him to be fit to emerge as the first in learned assemblies. The father's role is more than filial; it is one of mentoring. If an institution is considered a close-knit unit, like a household, the leader has to discharge his duties to equip the emerging generation

fit enough to occupy signal positions. This bears comparison with another couplet in the same chapter (68) where the father is advised to equip the rising generations better endowed than that of his, in the society's wider interests. Fred A. Manske Jr., modern writer, quoted by Peter J. Reed says,

> "The ultimate leader is one who is willing to develop people to the point that they eventually surpass him or her in knowledge and ability." [4]

This is what Valluvar has said 'take care of the next generation.' Modern political leaders seem to have understood this in their own way.

**2. Be the right spouse**

> "What does a house lack if the wife is full of virtues? And, what shall a house have when the wife lacks virtues?"*(53)*

If the word *wife* is replaced with *leader* and the word *house* with *corporate* house, what Valluvar implies could be sensed better. The wife runs the household; she is responsible for it, though financial management is traditionally vested with the husband. In the corporate sector the managing director/executive director or finance head might handle and distribute the fiscal assets. Yet, directions normally come from the Chairman, the leader. The combined role of Chairman-cum-Managing Director in many units is to vest corporate growth and creation and distribution of wealth with one leader. If the CMD - leader - is wise, the unit, the corporate house, will not lack anything. If the leader lacks virtues, nothing remains. Most households are known to dip in debts and poverty because of the greed or the vices of the life-partner. Most corporate houses also end up in financial fiasco with unmerited leaders, lacking virtues, taking the saddle.

**3. Be an embodiment of love**

> "Those who love others give themselves to their very bones; the unloving belong solely to themselves." (72)

Love is a fundamental trait with leadership. One who loves himself sets a bad example in life and leadership. He is called a megalomaniac.

"Out of love flows kindness and priceless friendship." (74)

"The ignorant say that kindness is virtue's ally. it is valour's lieutenant too." (76)

**4. Foster kith and kin**

The chapter, *Fostering the Kindred,* tells how a man should treat his kith and kin. Blood is one thing; the bread is another. Still, leadership can take cue from the concluding couplet:

> "When the estranged return with justifying reasons, the ruler may, after careful consideration, take them back." (530)

Those fired are not normally re-hired. This suits the corporate manager and employees. But a courtier's position is different. The leader can take back his former companion, should he offer justifiable reasons for having stayed away. The leader's mind should be free from prejudices in accepting his erstwhile companions/deputies. He should ponder over the circumstances with an open mind. A stubborn mind, resisting justifiable explanations, is not leadership. It is a different matter if the rejoining one is not accepted after due consideration of the explanation given. Hence Valluvar employs the term '*Ennik Kolal'- considered acceptance.*

**5. Be health conscious**

This chapter on healthcare by dietary control is helpful to leaders on extensive and tight travel schedules to meet the agenda. They eat various types of food and skip their routine. The fact that HR departments run more courses on stress and hypertension is an indication of the plight of the modern managers who swing between schedules. Valluvar says:

> "No need for therapy if food is taken after digesting." (942)
> "Avoid frequent in-take. "(943 - 944)
> "Don't be tempted to take food that you are not used to." (945)
> "Those on diet control could be happy; gluttons become sick." (946)
> "Diseases are caused by untimely, tasty but harmful food." (947)

Another couplet is a prescription for doctors.

> "The apothecary shall consider the endurance of the patient,
> magnitude of the illness and the timing for the medication." (949)

The medical context of previous couplet on diagnosis could also be applied to the management realm.

> "Before treating a patient, diagnose the disease, probe the causes and then prescribe medicine." (948)

To the manager or the leader, this couplet could mean, "When people bring you problems, keep the individual/s away, probe the root cause of the problems and then explore the means to resolve them." *Go to the root* is a lesson for all leaders.

**6. Have a pure mind**

> "Keep the mind free from impurity; that is everything of virtue;
> all else is nothing." (34)

Without a pure mind other accomplishments are brought to naught. Hence Valluvar expects leaders to have a pure mind. How does a man become good? By keeping his mind pure, says Valluvar. That is everything; the rest is of no consequence. Nearly thirty chapters later he reiterates it other words.

> "Don't go against your conscience. If you do, it would scorch you." (293)

**7. Curb your desires**

One need not be a saint to quell worries. Like a saint could a leader cannot keep away from worries; he has to shoulder responsibilities. Even then a leader can stay clear of affliction of worries. This is what Indian philosophy calls 'renunciation *in* action and not renunciation *of* action.' This demands a high level of maturity. The two couplets in this chapter, 341 & 343, compel comparison with the *Gita*'s concept of keeping a quiet mind.

> "No agony from those things a man keeps away from." (341)
> "The determined mind controls the five senses and gains what all it wants." (343)

**8. Control yourself**

For all learning and wealth one is expected to be controlled and guarded in his speech and temper. This chapter defines the virtues of self-control and points out what could be the gain or loss in following or not following the tenet - self-control.

"Those who control themselves and behave wisely gain distinction." (123)

"Loftier than a mountain is the greatness of the self-controlled." (124)

"Humility is a virtue with everyone; it is added wealth to the rich." (125)

"Hold your tongue, even if you do not control anything else; unguarded words lead to troubles." (127)

"A lone harsh word can undo all the gains." (128)

"Fire-burns heal, not the scars of verbal attacks." (129)

**9. Control the five senses**

"Determination goads for good the course of the five senses." (24)

Reading the other part of this couplet commentators hold that a control over senses is to make advance booking for a berth in heaven. The other world apart, even in this world the mind should goad senses. The employing of the term goad with the implied elephantine course of senses matters much. The same is the imagery in the *Bhagavad Gita.*

"The world is his who knows the ways of the five faculties, touch, taste, sight, smell and hearing." (27)

**10. Have good demeanour**

It is well-nigh difficult to find an English equivalent for the Tamil word *Ozhukkam* even as it is difficult to find a match for the Sanskrit word *Dharma.* Valluvar calls it one's behavioural response to others. Extolling demeanour's virtues he hints that a good conduct has its internal and external implications. Tomes of books define what good conduct is; but only a kind heart can pick it up and practice the same, not that it earns one a good name, but that it gives others the pleasure of having moved with a desirable person.

"The virtuous would not utter harmful words even by slip." (139)

"Education means little if one is not attuned to the world." (140)

The concluding couplet tells that mere learning amounts to nothing unless one sees the ways of the world around. Leaders of demeanour, through their cultivated conduct, leave such an impression that others long to continue their acquaintance. They command virtues, not those without it.

**11. Have patience**

Patience is easier advised than adhered. An ordinary man can afford to be impatient, not a leader. How does patience help one? Patience is the virtue of virtues, in the sense that it guards one from vices such as anger and prevents him from doing anything regretful. Not just that, patience also binds one to bear harmful words and harmful deeds of others.

> "One should be as patient as the earth that bears all digging." (151)
>
> "To bear harms of others is good, better still to forget them." (152)
>
> "To be wholesome forever is to follow the virtue of patience." (154)
>
> "To punish the perpetrator of wrongs is pleasure for a day; to forbear is to remain glorious all through." (156)
>
> "To bear the words of the vainglorious is more than saintly." (159)

**12. Congeniality**

As mind prompts the hand to give, Valluvar places the charitable mind ahead of the charitable deed. (Charitable mind is covered here and charitable hand in the '*Functions*' division.) Commentators and translators differ in fixing the meaning of the Tamil word *Oppuravu Arithal,* which has no synonym. To Ramachandra Dikshitar it is *'Decorum.'* For V.V.S. Aiyar it is *Complaisance.* To Rev. Drew and Lazarus, it is *Benevolence.* Monk Sivaya Subramuniaswami calls it '*Understanding one's duty to give.*' The term's subtlety points to togetherness and generosity. It is the feeling of *congeniality.* Valluvar employs impressive metaphors for the giving mind: The generous mind is like rain-bearing clouds (211) A lake serving the public, (215) A fruit-bearing tree of common reach (216) and, a herb with healing properties. (217).

"Those with a heart to help the poor will not mind their own indigent circumstances." (218)

"The one caught in a plight of being unhelpful, would consider himself impoverished." (219)

"Some could even pledge themselves to be able to give." (220)

**13. Be compassionate**

Valluvar commends compassion as a leadership trait like charity, as it lends meaning and glory. Glorious leaders are liberal and compassionate.

"Compassion is the wealth of all wealth. Even the low possess the material wealth." (241)

"Those who care the life of others need not fear death." (244)

"Natural for one to harass those weaker; let him recall that he too stood once as a weakling before others." (250)

**14. Be resolute**

When the times are hard, leaders are expected to be resolute. The resolve spurs them into action. Here is what Valluvar says on being resolute.

"A resolute mind is everything. The rest matter little." (661)

"An erudite advise: Avoid what might end up in a fiasco; having done it, stay unruffled." (662)

"Be discreet about the on-going task till it is completed; midway disclosure would cause misery." (663)

"The strong mind gets things done, as willed." (666)

"Don't ridicule men by their stature; they are like axle- pin upon which mighty wheels of a chariot spin. "(667)

"Be bold; don't brook delay in what has been deliberated." (668)

"Dare initial troubles; forge ahead with what would end up in joy." (669)

"Other assets don't count without resoluteness." (670)

Resoluteness is a virtue. But the moot questions are - when, where and how to be resolute? The righteous people are guided by right resolves. Here are two examples; from Shakespeare and Vyasa. To her dithering husband, Gen. Macbeth (the dithering for the good, with second thoughts over killing his king) tells Lady Macbeth:

> "I have given suck and know how tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me. I would, while, it was smiling in my face, have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums, and dashed the brains out, had I so sworn." [5]

What a resolute motherliness! Lady Macbeth apart, here is the morally fortified resolve of a son in the *Mahabharata*, who dares his mother's mandate. Told by his mother Satyavati to have conjugal relations with the wives of his dead brothers, in the interest of progeny for the royal dynasty, Bhishma who had already taken the vow to be a celibate, responded:

> "Mother, ...at no cost can I violate my own vow of celibacy. Truth is supreme to me. Nothing can divert me from the path of truth. Accepting the throne or leading a married life amounts to abandoning truth and I just cannot do that. I am firm in my resolve. It is impolite to defy you; yet my decision is final." [6]

For a person like Bhishma, a vow is a vow. His virtue is not tempted either by carnal pleasures or a desire for the crown. In fact, it was his mother who wanted him to be a celibate; again it was she who pleaded for revoking it. Still Bhishma did not yield. That is Resoluteness. In fact, the name *Bhishma* means Mr. Resoluteness, which he came to have because of that quality; his original name was Devavrata.

**15. Be wise**

Wisdom obtained by learning and listening and pondering is another key component of leadership. Even then the process of pondering is facilitated by the other two sources. Still wisdom is different from learning and listening. The ways to gain and use wisdom, and what kind of wisdom, are explained by Valluvar in Chapter 43 *Possession of Wisdom*. Valluvar employs war imagery in the opening couplet insisting that wisdom guards one who possesses it.

"Wisdom is a weapon that guards against onslaughts. It is a fortress within, that no enemy can destroy." (421)

"Wisdom will harness the mind, diverting one from the wrong path and directing him toward the right." (422)

In the other couplets Valluvar points out what wisdom is:

"Sources apart, the wise discern the meaning of what is told." (423)

"The wise will foresee. The unwise will not." (427)

"The wise fear what is to be feared; not the unwise." (428)

"Foresighted wise stand guarded. Not the unwise." (429)

"The wise possess everything. No possession amounts to anything to the unwise." (430)

Wisdom should be a weapon to ward off destruction, a fortress to protect from external assaults, a harness of the mind toward good things, helping him delve deep to detect truth in what is being told; help speak clearly; to listen subtly; to befriend the wise; to abide by the ways of the world; to foresee future; to know what to dread and be forearmed. Course directors can interpret the couplets; as Valluvar has advocated 2100 years ago, wisdom is to stay clear of misunderstanding, to avoid failures.

**16. Preserve honour**

The fear of losing prestige binds even ordinary men to behave carefully. It is, therefore, incumbent on leaders that they keep to their high status by not doing anything that mars their prestige.

"Shun deeds that diminish honour, even if they are vital for life." (961)

"Be modest in prosperity and dignified in adversity." (963)

"Honourable men, fallen from status, are like fallen hair." *(964)*

"Even a jot of fault lowers the prestige of the great." (965)

"When honour is at stake, the great lay down their life." (969)

**17. Beware of being caught by shame**

As is elsewhere the Tamil term *Naann* has not been translated properly. Most translators call it 'modesty.' *Naann* is a term that covers modesty too; but not just that. It is a coyness that is creative, different from shyness; a daring with a concern for bashfulness. Pride prompts one to be foolhardy whereas leaders avoid vain pride since modesty is inherent in them. That is what Valluvar calls *Naann.*

> "Food, dress, *et al*, are common for all; being sensitive to a blot of shame distinguishes the good from the rest." (1012)
>
> "Persons sensitive to the factor of shame do not court it, nor do they cause it in others." (1015)
>
> "Dame Virtue would be ashamed, seeing the shameless." (1018)
>
> "The shameless destroy everything. " (1019)

**18. Set your targets high**

> "The great perform rare deeds; the lowly cannot." (26)

Leaders perform great deeds, not just the ordinary. They are obliged to set their targets high. An easy reach of high targets is possible through high thinking, methodical planning and matching efforts.

**19. May your learning stand by you**

The chapter on *Learning* answers the questions: How does a ruler/leader know the truth behind everything? How does he keep his mind pure to decide on matters? *Tirukkural*'s Leadership traits are paraphrased here as directives with their loaded import. *(The Kural* numbers are in brackets)

> "Learn perfectly and stand up to your learning." (391)

Half-hearted, imperfect, insufficient attempt is not learning. Education should mould one's conduct and character. Any dichotomy is not virtue.

> "Numbers and Letters are the eyes of one." (392)

Skills in mathematics and languages are essential. It is a misnomer that they are required only for teachers, traders and students of science. Subjects under humanities also call for skills in numbers. It is fallacious to hold that only teachers or writers need language skills. Executives, politicians, who aspire to be leaders, know for certain the importance of communication skills, which Valluvar elucidates in other chapters. In fact his contribution to the subtleties of communication could form a separate research project.

> "So do the learned behave that the visitors long to see them and feel the pangs while parting with them." (394)

Erudition in itself is no asset. The learned one, the ruler, the counselor, the leader in short, should be affable to his visitors, listen to them patiently, express genuine concern. That alone will make the leader as a person sought after and respected.

> "The learned shall stay humble, as have-not before the have." (395)

Modesty is a virtue. While the learned tend to be haughty and conceited, learned leaders, with modesty, are always hailed.

> "Any place is his; any country is his – to the one who keeps learning.
> Why doesn't one learn all through?" (397)

As the world has shrunk into a global village, with its shared wealth, multi-nationals, the CEOs are to be polyglots. Needless to say that learning is a continuous process for them.

**20. Let not anyone around you neglect learning**

The chapter, *Neglect of Learning*, provides cues to leaders. Political leaders should ensure that all citizens get educated. Corporate leaders shall train and develop the personnel for gains. That is an essential leadership trait.

**21. Be truthful in thought, word and deed**

Thought provokes deeds. Hence Valluvar calls for truthfulness and its manifestation in word or deed.

> "Truthfulness is avoiding harmful words." (291)

Leaders should note this. Who are leaders? Those enshrined in the heart of people. What is the way for it? Valluvar says:

"The truthful in heart are enshrined in the hearts of people." (294)

How to observe truth in heart?

"Don't go against your conscience. If you do, it would scorch you." (293)

**22. Think before you act**

"Weigh the pros and cons, loss and gain, ere you embark on anything." (461)

"Nothing is unattainable to the one who deliberates and takes the counsel of known friends. "(462)

"The wise never encourage enterprises that eat away the capital." (463)

"Those who dread disgrace of ridicule will not commence any task that is unclear." (464)

A leader should have forethought on how his actions would be perceived by others. Dreading ridicule or disgrace cautions him in his deeds. But this does not mean that he should not dare; he should; still he should be careful; his actions should not put him in disgrace or ridicule.

"To pursue an ill-conceived plan is to augment the enemy's strength." (465)

One's folly is another's strength. If one loses in unplanned endeavours he strengthens his enemy. Valluvar looks at the consequences from the other side. If advised '*plan and prosper*', one might not pay serious attention to it. If cautioned that one's follies strengthen his enemy, one takes cues aptly. Hence Valluvar's corollary perspective is to be noted and commended.

"Doing what shouldn't be done will bring ruin, and not doing what should be done will also bring ruin." (466)

This oft-quoted couplet says judgement is needed to decide on actions, to be done and not to be done. Leaders with judgement never face dilemma; they will not fumble.

"Ponder over before you act; hindsight is disgrace." (467)

Whatever be the exigency, one should not just plunge into action before giving a thought on what is to be done. An afterthought could always be a matter of regret. Leaders do not resort to any hurried action. They think wise; they think twice.

**23. Note what to avoid**

"Virtue is to avoid envy, anger, greed and unsavoury speech."(35)

Valluvar is categorical about these four *don'ts* for a leader; he explains the consequences of each at length in later chapters.

**24. Evaluate and cultivate friendship**

Valluvar describes friendship in five chapters: Friendship, Choosing the Right Friends, Sustaining Friendship, Bad Friends and Forbidden Friendship. The first is a matter of the heart; the rest revolve on a sound mind.

"Friendship is a gift; it fights against foes." (781)

"Friendship with the wise leads to light; that with the unwise leads to darkness." (782)

"Friendship with the cultured is engrossing education." (783)

"Friendship is not just for cheering up; but to reprimand while one goes astray." (784)

"Friendship wards off distress with such an alacrity like a hand that hurries to the slipping garment." (788)

**25. Don't incur the wrath of great men**

"The wrath of those who have scaled the hill of Virtue is not bearable even for a brief moment." (29)

Leaders are not prone to anger; they are expected to give up anger, under provocation. If they do, probably irked by the activities of others, the vent is unbearable. This is a lesson to those who interact with leaders, as to not to provoke them.

**26. Know the etiquette**

To be courtier in home country is more delicate than being an envoy in a host country. How to get along with one's own king? Valluvar's tips on courtly manners:

> "Moving with the king is abiding by the hearth, one should not be too close or too far." (691)
>
> "Never harbour desires on par with the king. If you don't desire so, the king would confer substantial riches." (692)
>
> "Be guarded. Indiscretion leads to irrevocable suspicion." (693)
>
> "In the presence of elders do not whisper unto others; don't signal anything by sly smiles." (694)
>
> "When the king is in parleys, don't butt in; don't over-hear. Wait till he chooses to tell you the matter." (695)
>
> "What should be conveyed be conveyed to the king; but wait for the right moment; know his receptivity moment." (696)
>
> "Tell only what the king would hear willingly. Don't tell useless things, even when asked for." (697)
>
> "The sovereignty should be respected, be the king younger or in kinship." (698)
>
> "The wise will not do anything infradig, assuming their hold." (699)
>
> "Harmful it is to behave in an undignified manner or cause breach of protocol upon long-term familiarity." (700)

The hearth imagery, subtleties in courtly manners, not taking undue advantages of kinship or familiarity are qualities that a manager shall choose to cultivate in moving with leaders.

**27. Read the mind on the face**

One's countenance is more expressive than his tongue. The clever read thoughts from the face, part of what is called body language. A leader can read another's heart

from his face. Valluvar, who calls face as the mirror of the mind, says the use of the eyes is to read the face as the face reflects cordiality or hostility. Valluvar says,

"Engage the one who reads faces, however much the hiring costs." (703)

Negotiating leaders or leaders' negotiators, will gain much in this chapter, which tells, in different words, that face-reading is mind-reading and eyes are unequivocal indicators of the mind.

**28. Assess your friends**

Valluvar who hails friendship wants it to be rated before cultivated:

"Nothing is more pernicious than an unrated friendship." (791)

"The worth of friendship is measured in times of distress." (796)

"Cling on to good friends; cast away the rest." (800)

**29. Know your strength**

A leader of a country, or a corporate unit, should realise his strength. Wars had been lost by incorrect assessments, over-estimating one's strength and underestimating the valiance of the rivals. *Kural* is specific about right assessment of strength.

"One should weigh the demands of the deed, his strength and the strength of his allies and rivals." (471)

Assessment of strength is vital. Normally leaders fail in one or the other of these factors. Any error would prove fatal. Valluvar proceeds further:

"Nothing is impossible to those who judge the nature and means of their task and proceed with determination." (472)

Three factors that make things possible: assessment of the nature of the task ahead, potential of the means and the determination to employ those means.

"A wrong assessment of one's strength plunges him jealously into projects and miscarries him midway." (473)

"One shall assess his strength exactly. Venturing without realistic assessment of strength would cause midway mishaps." (473)

"Those who do not live in peace with the neighbourhood, but praise themselves on their own assumed strength would perish." (474)

"Even peacock's feathers break axles when overloaded." (475)

**30. Give no room for folly, within or around**

Valluvar says: *Folly* does everything improperly. It retains the bad, gives up the good. It takes up the forbidden and is unabashed over shameful things. The fool does not follow what he preaches. He is unable to preserve the riches. Intoxicated with wealth, the stupid are happy with friendship that can break away anytime. No leader with a trace of folly is worth his title. What relevance does this chapter have then? Leaders are given clues on stupidity's marks, so that the stupid could be kept away.

**31. Be fortified internally to tackle enemies**

Winning depends upon sizing up the enemy. But Valluvar's advice to leaders, to conquer enemies, is different. Says he, "Be righteous, conquer your anger, lust; devise strategy, seize the opportunities. Never get your weak-nesses as other's exploits." Each couplet offers a valuable hint.

"Dare the strong, not the weak." (861)

"The unloving and unaiding around, how can one dare enemies? " (862)

"The cowardly, ignorant, restless and the ungenerous is an easy prey to enmity." (863)

"The angry and the immature can easily be won over by anybody, anywhere, anytime." (864)

"The one not considering the means, not seizing opportunities, not sensitive to shame, not cultured would be won over happily." (865)

"The excessively angry and lusty persons be cast aside." (866)

Couplet 867 has baffled many commentators and translators. Some fumble to read the poet's mind. *Pay for and earn the enmity of ...* That is the crux. S.M. Diaz seems to get closer than others, but strays out. The couplet's import could be rendered thus:

> "Incur, at any cost, the enmity of the one who plays a double game." (867)

Possibly what Diaz says does not mean the poet's perspective. The two mystifying Tamil words are – *Aduthirunthu - Maanatha.* The first word means *abiding close by*. The second: *the un-virtuous.*

If one close by is un-virtuous, provoke him and earn his enmity. He cannot be your friend anymore. Spot him and put him in the list of your enemies. If he is inimical, you can tackle him properly. On the other hand, if pretentious relationship continues, you are the loser. Severing him might cause initially some loss. Bear it; pay the price and gain ultimately. Commentators and translators have not delved deep into the poet's mind because they were naïve scholars, not exposed to crafty situations.

Modern political and corporate leaders have understood this phenomenon better. They are sensitive to and secretive about the enmity in proximity, in the guise of friendship. That is why they cannot treat their deputies as friends. In the coalition politics of these days, chiefs of political parties worry more about their own allies than about opposition parties. His clue is very helpful to modern political leaders. Valluvar says:

> "The two help enemies: not to be endowed with virtues, but vices, and to stay unsupported by one's own clan." *(868)*
>
> "Blissful is he who is blessed with wicked and dreading enemies." (869)
>
> "Glory shall never be his who never learns, who is angry and who is incapable of doing even small things." (870)

This chapter implores harmony, expects the leader to be at peace with himself before he sets out to tackle his enemies. That is why Valluvar tags the adjective *Maatchi* (greatness) to *Pahai,* (enmity) even as he has linked it to *Irai* - God/King, implying that enmity is awesome and cannot be underrated.

**32. Understand the nature of enmity**

Tackling enmity is as important as cultivating friendship. Valluvar has given many useful tips in this regard. They are:

"There shall be no hostility even for jest." (871)

"Incur the enmity of the soldiers, not orators." (872)

"To be lonely and hostile to everyone is worse than lunacy." (873)

"The world goes by kings who befriend even their foes." (874)

"Never reveal your weaknesses to your enemies." (877)

"Undo enmity at its infancy, as uprooting a briery plant." (879)

One who takes cues is bound to win over his enemies. It is incumbent on a leader to cultivate each trait for his good.

**33. Hitch your wagon to glory**

It is natural to be jealous of the popular. However, it would be rewarding to know how to become glorious. Leaders and leader-aspirants can learn much from this chapter. Valluvar continues the subject of the previous two chapters and avers that those who hitch their wagon to glory shall be charitable; they do not attach importance to things transient.

"Be charitable and live praiseworthily." (231-232)

"In life other things are transient, not glory." (233)

"To be born is to live gloriously." (236)

"Without regretting for not living gloriously, why should one blame others?" (237)

The last-mentioned couplet points out lack of leadership and its spillover.

**34. Focus, meditate and envision**

Penance is what one finds only in lexicons and the legends, not in the real-life situation of this millennium, if the word is to be taken as a sage in yoga for years,

seeking a boon. In the current context the word could refer to meditation, single-minded devotion, steadfastness, focus, passion and vision in the political and corporate contexts. Modern corporate leaders identify the aforesaid qualities as components of leadership.

> "Penance is to alleviate sufferings, not to harm." (261)
>
> "Penance helps patronise friends and vanquish foes." (264)
>
> "The strong-willed shine through hardships as gold out of smithy." (267)

**35. Know your duties**

A minister too is a leader in his own way, although he works for another leader, the king. The relationship between the two, in the modern context could be that of the leader and the manager. The manager should also possess leadership qualities; he is not less of a leader because he works for another leader, ie, the king. Here are the prescriptions for the minister/manager.

> "Minister is one who is an adept in choosing the task, the time and the means." (631)
>
> "Care for the citizens, learning, wisdom, determination and perseverance are the five traits of a minister." (632)
>
> "A minister shall keep apart those to be sundered, unite those to be brought together and reconcile those who parted ways." (633)
>
> "The minister is one who contemplates over the deeds to be done, employs the right persons and gets things done." (634)
>
> "A minister is one who knows ethical codes, employs wise words and enjoys the support of the highly erudite company." (635)
>
> "Who dares one of vast learning and sharp intellect?" (636)
>
> "What matters is not expertise in execution but biding by the way of the world." (637)
>
> "Ability is not planning, but execution." (640)

**36. Be eco-conscious for the common good**

No poetic work has voiced the gifts of rain so precisely and poignantly. The intent here is not to praise nature, but to exhort man to live in tune with nature. Valluvar points out the economic and ecological gains by rains and the loss otherwise. When water sets fire the politics of the day, when leaders, caught in a militant mire to deny water to the needy, when a government floats funds for drought relief as well as flood relief in different parts of the country simultaneously, these couplets bear relevance to political leaders, incumbent and aspirant. Without fear or favour, all leaders are supposed to attune to society, to be eco-conscious and foster factors that bring in copious rainfall, as the world cannot survive without adequate water resources.

**37. Beware of the enemy within**

"Beware of enemies cloaked in a bond of relationship." (882)

Other couplets explain various aspects of hidden enmity among relatives. One should detect it. Leaders are capable of it.

**38. Don't be deluded by illusions**

Valluvar says purity is detachment from anger, lust and illusion. One sincere in pursuit of truth distinguishes the unreal from the real, be it information furnished or image created. Five couplets have a bearing on *decision-making* based on one's capacity to detect illusions from the reality. They are:

"Discriminate the real from the unreal, myth from truth." (351)

"Those not deluded by ignorance and illusion will be happy." (352)

"Without wise perception, the five senses are of no avail." (354)

"Whatever be the nature of things, know the core of it." (355)

"Exterminate desires, hatred and illusion." (360)

**39. Realise the transient nature of the world**

Many philosophers have been telling time and again that life is transient. Impermanence is the only permanent fact of life. Valluvar who goes by the same

tenets, explains the fleeting nature of life in different images and offers poignant advice, which would benefit the world, if leaders could take it.

"Wealth is fleeting; channel it by charities to arrest it." (333)

Fortunately whether Ford, Rockefeller, Bill Gates, Tatas and Birlas have read *Kural* or not, they have given permanence to their wealth by incepting charitable trusts. It does inspire others.

**40. Dare destiny**

Destiny has been vividly portrayed in legends across the world. They have pictured men both as victims and challengers. Valluvar, writing a didactic work, taking the pithy form of couplet, does not have the luxury of a wide canvas to pitch man against destiny in any form of encounter. Nonetheless, he has deftly balanced fate and endeavour. Whether he endorsed the domination of destiny, or pit the man against it, is still a matter of interesting debate. He has not underplayed the hold of destiny; at the same time, he has coaxed the man to brave it with all his might and perseverance. He is not a fatalist in any pessimistic sense of the term. He encourages mankind to brave destiny with guts and perseverance in chapters – 60, 61, 62 and 63.

The following are the nine thought-based eschewable qualities:

**1. Don't be ego-conscious**

Even the invocation couplet implies personality development and leader-ship. This couplet is acceptable by people of any faith:

"The one who draws himself to the feet of Him Who is
free from prejudices shall suffer no miseries." (4)

Theist or not, this should enthuse man/leader to be free from likes and dislikes and to follow the one who has no prejudices.

**2. Cast away all desires**

Chapter 37 implies spiritual aspects that fit ascetics. It is also relevant for leaders. It is akin to the message of the *Bhagavad Gita*, - to stay unattached. What Valluvar calls *passion* here is different from its Western meaning. What the modern Western

writers mean by *Passion* is *Ookkamudaimai* (enthusiasm) in Tamil. By *Passion, Kural* refers only to sensuous pleasures. Leaders are expected to eschew that sort of passion. Valluvar explains it in different ways in the ten couplets of this chapter, as base desires entertained by leaders ruin them, those around them and even the institutions they lead.

**3. Avoid jealousy**

Jealousy is the basest of vices, plunging one into other vices. One who avoids jealousy, does not fall into the clutches of other vices. The tyrant leaders of history are those who have been envious of others. Good leadership and envy do not go together. That is what Valluvar imparts here:

"To have an unenvious mind is to be on the path of virtue." (161)

"One knows the shameful outcome will not be jealous." (164)

"There could be no enemy for one's ruin except envy." (165)

"The envious never rise up, the unenvious never fall." (170)

**4. Eschew hatred**

Leaders shall not hate any. Not loving does not mean hating. To note the difference between the two is wisdom. Hatred is a mental disorder. It paves way for other undesirable qualities in mind. It presages fall, says Valluvar.

"Hatred is a disease that cankers in one's culture." (851)

"Do not hate and harm even those who have harmed you." (852)

'He who has no hatred for others shall be happy forever." (854)

"Hatred saps wealth. Hence it should be given up." (858)

**5. Never be angry**

Anger has earned more notoriety for leaders than any other trait. An affable leader is likeable any day, anywhere. Angry leaders are obeyed, but not respected. If biographies had not glossed over the faults of leaders, many of them would have been shown as men of anger. Valluvar presents anger's menacing dimensions. One is

normally prone to burst out in anger with the weak or those down the line. As a shrewd psychologist, Valluvar wants men to avoid anger against the unbearable and the meek.

"Why should one be angry at the weak who cannot rebut?
Those who can rebut do not care anger. (301)

"Uncontrolled anger causes havoc later. (303)

"Anger spoils one's pleasant disposition. (304)

"Guarding means, guarding from anger; anger will destroy. (305)

"Anger is a fire; it does not discriminate the near and dear. (306)

"Even when one is harmed, better he gives no room for anger. (308)

"One shall gain anything, if he can give up anger. (309)

**6. Do not entertain even the thought of thieving**

Theft is of different types. Objects entice the weak-minded; thieving is born in mind. Valluvar proscribes thieving. Does thieving have relevance to leadership? Are leaders thieves? In petty sense, no. If a leader indulges in theft of any kind for any reason, his followers will also do so. Business world may have venues bordering on theft. Still leaders should desist from it. Hence Valluvar says the mind should not harbour thieving.

"One who does not want to be despised, should guard his mind
from any thought on thieving." (281, 282)

"What is gained by thievery would seem to grow, but would vanish." (283)

**7. Don't covet somebody's wife**

The lust for spouses of others has ruined many from epic times to these days. Still, there is a need to reiterate this, as the weak human nature remains much the same. The extramarital links of ordinary men go unnoticed; they evoke little criticism. Valluvar has not exempted in this respect even the common man. Yet leaders have to keep themselves above carnal cravings, as they have to set example for others to

follow suit. A leader is expected to be exemplary in anything, even in his marital life. Valluvar says:

> "All good things in a man would be set to naught if he be enamoured of somebody's wife." (144)
>
> "To the erudite, staying within marital confines is not simply a matter of behaviour, but virtuousness." (148)
>
> "Even the one prone to all vices, shall keep himself away from coveting another man's wife." (150)

**8. Don't be led by women (?)**

Ancient texts reflected the male-chauvinistic society of the times. This chapter should be understood in that milieu. Now many leaders, especially in the corporate sector, have acknowledged their success to women. When education was denied to women in the ancient society, they were treated as vanity personified. Hence Valluvar advised men not to be led by women.

**9. Keep away from harlots**

Leaders, expected to be models are advised to avoid extra-marital relation-ship, as that would turn esteem into despise. Hence harlots be avoided.

**The cultivable Functions**

Valluvar lists the following 40 cultivable functions as thought-prompted:

**1. Be kindly disposed to everyone**

Some times kindness leads to misplaced faith; but it does it never land one in irretrievable misery. That is why ancient texts prescribe kindness as a trait for leaders. Why should kindness be cultivated and expressed? Valluvar says:

> "Kindness sustains the world." (571)
>
> "The unkind are a burden to the planet." (572)
>
> "If eyes do not show kindness, what is the use in having them?"
> (Never cast stern looks on any) (574)

"The world belongs to the compassionate." (578)

"To be compassionate even to those who cause harm is virtue." (579)

"The compassionate can stomach even poison as nectar." (580)

**2. Be courteous**

The following edicts on courtesy provide guidelines to leaders.

"Easy accessibility is a mark of courtesy." (991)

"Love and noble descent beget courtesy." (992)

"Men resemble physically, not in the courtesy component." (993)

"No disparaging, even for kidding. It is not courtesy." (995)

"The world revolves by the courteous; but for them, it would have been ruined." (996)

"Those who lack courtesy are wooden, even if their intellect is as sharp as a rasp." (997)

"It ill-behoves one to be discourteous even to the unfriendly and the harmful." (998)

"Those who lack cheers spell darkness even at noon." (999)

"Wealth with the discourteous is milk curdled by an unclean vessel." (1000)

**3. Be sensitive to the nuances of hospitality**

Speaking of body language, Valluvar employs a sensitive simile to drive home the point that the genuinely welcome looks of the host towards the guest matters most.

"The *anicham* flower withers at the very smelling. So do guests wither away at the cold looks of the host." (90)

Cold looks drive guests away, even as the touchy *anicham* flower that withers at being smelt. Transferred to the current context of the corporate rituals of receptions,

luncheons and dinners, the couplet has a bearing on etiquette. Hotel industry, a paid service, is euphemistically called the hospitality industry. Those who stay and pay in hotels, are, ironically, called guests, though they should be called customers or patrons. Even then the looks of the host matters more than the dishes.

**4. Be grateful**

The chapter on *Gratitude* depicts its dimensions from the angle and quantum of benefits, beneficiary's disposition to benefactor and reciprocity. The three that bear direct relevance to the functions of leadership are:

> "The help is rated not in itself but by the worth of the recipient." (105)
>
> "Never forget the friendship of the pure; never give up that of those who helped in distress." (106)
>
> "The gesture of recalling the sole good deed jettisons even the deadly harms perpetrated by one." (109)

**5. Gain support of the Great**

This chapter is a distant predecessor to what is presented in modern management as a concept - *mentoring*. As counsels, the sages were no yes men. They were leaders of leaders. They did not fail to admonish the king/leader who took wrong steps.

In ancient India, as Prof. G. D. Sharma points out,

> "All kings without exception had a *prohit/acharya* close to them. These conscience-keepers were wise men and served as philosophers and guides to kings. They commanded great reverence and enjoyed a very high status in the court as well as in the general public." [7]

Much the same is postulated here and it is relevant even now.

> "Gain the counsel of great men who allay today's ills and ward off tomorrow's troubles." (442)
>
> "One's strength is to merit the friendship of those greater." (444)
>
> "Counsels being his eyes, may the king choose them carefully." (445)

* Who could destroy the one who has aides to reprimand? (447)
* No investment, no profit. No support, no stability. (448)

**6. To be good is to be dutiful**

Ethical texts insist performance of duties. It should be stressed more than ever now when clamour for rights and privileges drown one's obligation to discharge his duties, personal, professional and social. Here is what Valluvar says on duties:

> "The virtuous is one who knows and discharges his duties." (981)
>
> "To the great, nothing is as important as character." (982)
>
> "The five pillars that support character are love, bashfulness, universality, compassion and honesty." (983)
>
> "Penance is not to kill; nobility is not to slander." (984)
>
> "Humility is strength of the great; with the erudite, it disarms a foe." (985)
>
> "Nobility's touchstone is to concede defeat even to the unmatched." (986)
>
> "What use is of nobility, if it cannot return good even to those who have done harm?" (987)
>
> "The noble do not hold even poverty a disgrace." (988)
>
> "At the deluge, oceans may be boisterous, not the noble." (989)
>
> "Earth cannot hold its burden, if the noble's nobility sinks." (990)

These couplets are general observations of life and not specific- *do this-* type tips. Still bearing in mind the import of each couplet would help the leader of any level to respond positively to what is expected of him/her. Success with renown is assured to the practitioners.

**7. May you ever be noble**

Leaders are distinguished by their nobility. How to be noble? What the traits going with nobility? Valluvar answers:

"Aspiring for glory is light. Not seeking it is blight." (971)

"All are born equal; they differ by their performance." (972)

"To be high or low depends not on position but conduct." (973)

"Greatness is performing rare deeds ably." (975)

"The low never think of gaining by the great." (976)

"Parochial ones, taking high positions, turn arrogant." (977)

"The great behave modestly; the low brag about them." (978)

"Greatness quells the ego; pettiness flaunts haughtiness." (979)

"The great gloss over the faults of others; the lowly hasten to expose them." (980)

Those who assume high positions shall take these lessons that will make them leaders of eminence through nobility.

**8. Be an impartial judge**

Judgement should precede actions. Leaders should be impartial is hailed virtuous. The lack of it harms. An individual's partiality helps him or harms him; at worst, it could harm only a limited circle. But a leader's partiality could harm a generation, institutions and even the nation. Valluvar rules:

"Impartiality in meting out justice does not weigh extraneous factors." (111)

"Anon give up the wealth from swerving justice, even if it brings in good " (113)

"The fit and the unfit are known by their legacy." (114)

"If you swerve from justice, be sure, you are done with." (116)

"The just shall be like the pointer of a balance, upright when weighing." (118)

"Words could be straight if the weighing mind is right." (119)

"Let traders weigh interests of others as of their own." (120)

**9. Know the goals**

The next four chapters, *Farming, Poverty, Begging* and *Dread of Begging* set goals for leaders. Farming contributes to the GDP. Poverty should be alleviated through proper creation of wealth, which is the duty of leaders. The result of poverty is begging. A leader should not leave his people wallow in poverty. Valluvar curses such leaders who reduce their citizens to beggars and advises that only those are leaders who dread beggary. The couplets have a pertinent plea to leaders on creating and distributing wealth.

**10. Aim anything big and gain it**

Any one can perform small deeds. Leaders are not needed for that. A leader should set his aims high and strive to achieve them. Otherwise he is not worth his salt.

> "Better folow an elephant that skips the spear than the rabbit that falls by the arrow." (772)
>
> "To be considerate to the defeated is also part of valour." (773)

Winning matters. Valour that wins causes pride. Yet, if the winner is considerate toward the defeated it raises his stature.

**11. Be just in your administration**

This chapter is apparently meant for kings. What has it to do with modern corporate leaders? According to G. D. Sharma, the term *rajya* in ancient political literature meant the State, which had the following seven [8] constituents. Its modern corporate equivalents are as given in the brackets.

1. Raja (The leader)
2. Amatya/mantri (The Board of Directors)
3. Surhit, the friendly neighbouring state (parent company or business partner.)
4. Kosh (Finances)
5. Danda (Administrative system endorsing punishments)
6. Durg (The security system)
7. Bal (The work force)

Valluvar also addresses these seven segments, speaking kings/leaders good and bad. A king, a leader, because of his position, is to administer justice; that obliges to conduct himself just. What are the quotients of a just leader? He lists the following in the opening couplet of Chapter 55, *Just Rule*:

(i) A thorough investigation issues brought in;
(ii) an unbiased disposition;
(iii) impartiality to the parties;
(iv) and observing the code of law. (541)

"The king is duty-bound to punish the wrong-doers." (549)

The act of punishing is just weeding out the guilty in the society. Even in the corporate world, the leader can take to these mandates, without offending any or transgressing his powers. Of course, 'Reward and Punishment' is part of management, then and now, whatever is the area of activity.

**12. Be alacritous**

Translators employ different terms for the Tamil word *Pochavamai*, title of Chapter No: 54. To V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar it is *Against Forgetfulness*; For V.V.S Aiyar it is *'Guarding against Insouciance.* Sivaya Subramuniyaswami calls it as *'Against Unmindfulness'*, whereas the import of the word, as sensed from the ten couplets, could be Not having an alert mind, or Lacking alacrity. Hence this chapter can be taken to express the following on Alacrity a vital trait of leadership. Borne in mind, the last two couplets would embolden leaders to be exceptional achievers against odds. Valluvar implies that the will and perseverance can win over anything.

"Mad joy is worse than wild outburst of anger in causing harm." (31)

Leaders should not lose themselves in rejoicing. Excessive indulgence, joy or anger, causes harm.

"As penury saps faculties, absent-mindedness mars one's glory." (532)

"The wise say, renown will not be his who is not alacritous." (533)

"Forts do not guard the cowards, nor riches the unalacritous." (534)

"One not guided by foresight will have to repent what befalls." (535)

"Nonpareil is the unslippery vigilant mind over everyone." (536)

"Nothing is impossible to the ever vigilant." (537)

"Remember during the moments of joy the plight of the forgetful." (539)

All these couplets bring to the fore the importance of having an alert mind, which is an essential quality for leaders.

**13. Be pro-active**

A leader's resolve is not expressed verbally. Strong resolves are reflected in his actions. How to act? Valluvar guides:

"Once the deliberation is over, start action; it is improper to tarry. (671)

"There should be no delay in what should not be delayed, what can wait, shall wait. (672)

"Prompt action is good; where it is not feasible, choose the appropriate alternative to succeed. (673)

"Unfinished action and unvanquished enemies stay as embers to blow up later. (674)

"Five factors to be looked into before taking up action: funds, means, time, place, and the contemplated action. (675)

"To be considered in acting upon are: the result, the impediments and the consequences. (676)

"To be prenticed under an expert is to learn the nuances. (677)

"Set an elephant to trap an elephant; screw a deed for a deed. (678)

"Before helping friends, befriend anon those who left the fold of friendship (679)

"Minor rulers pay obeisance and befriend the mighty ones in the interest of their shuddering citizens. (670)

The above couplets, meant for rulers in monarchic regime are relevant to the modern corporate realm as well as they offer appropriate methodologies.

**14. Be pure in action**

Leaders who know nuances of communication attract crowds; still they are judged not by their words, but by their action, pure action. How to be pure in action? Here are *Kural's* mandates:

"Aides bring in wealth; still initiative fulfils aspirations." (651)

"Take up only virtuous and fame-ensuring deeds." (652, 653)

"The perfect shall not swerve from virtue even in adversity." (654)

"Never do anything that you may have to repent later; if you had done that, may you not do it again." (655)

"Even if thy mother is starving, don't do anything that the erudite would despise." (656)

"Great men's poverty is greater than the wealth of sinners." (657)

"Doing the forbidden might pay off initially, not all through." (658)

"Heaping ill-gotten wealth is storing water in an unkilned pot." (660)

**15. Be methodical**

"Many might support; still immethodical acts go awry." (468)

A leader shall think and act methodically. Immethodical deeds turn awry, despite initial euphoria. Leaders shall note that mass support is no yardstick for probity.

"One might err even in doing good, if the recipient's deserts are not considered." (469)

This couplet points out that a leader, while doing good to others, shall weigh the deserts of the beneficiary. What is sauce for the goose could be the sauce for the gander, but not always, not everywhere, not for all the ganders. Taking the

beneficiary's merits into account is good leadership. May those in government, showering goodies on citizens, note that distributing undeserving gifts is to subsidise, not commodities, but the citizenry.

> "A leader shall act without giving room for blame. People will not accept anything that cannot be accepted." (470)

A leader should function without giving room for blemish. He should always uphold the dignity of himself and his office.

**16. Be alive to the time factor**

Time, a crucial factor, matters as much as money. Valluvar who starts with crows and owls ends the chapter with herons, promp-ting man to learn from nature.

> "May the king choose the time to win; a crow can overpower an owl during daytime." (481)

Valluvar is right; history reveals ill-timed wars were lost. That is true even now. This simile could be extended to the corporate den too. Everyone has his comfort time zones. There are crows and owls among people - those who work well during daytime and those in nights. In these days of outsourcing and call centers, a leader should be shrewd enough to spot the owls and the crows for proper deployment. This is a leadership trait.

> "Right time coupled with the right means ensures victory. (483)
>
> "Right time going along with right place ensures victory. (484)
>
> "Strike at the right time and place to win the world. (485)
>
> "Patient restraint of the enthusiastic is not weakness but tactics. (486)
>
> "The clear minded hold forth for the opportune moment. (487)
>
> "Seize the rare opportunities; accomplish feats. (489)
>
> "Wait patiently for the right moment and pitchfork like a heron. (490)

**17. Don't procrastinate**

"If you can do good, do it today. Don't postpone it for morrow."(36)

Time management is elucidated in depth later. Suffice here to know that Valluvar insists on doing things promptly.

**18. Be enthusiastic**

A leader may draw assistance from several quarters. Still he should be active himself. What matters is his enthusiasm. Valluvar has extolled the virtues of will power, courage and swinging into action in as many ways as possible. Here is a paraphrase of the chapter on energy and enthusiasm.

"Only the pro-active possess anything, not the rest." (591)

"Enthusiasm is wealth that stays, not the material one." (592)

"The persevering shall never brood over losses." (593)

"One with undaunted will is on the trail of wealth." (594)

"A man's grasp is as high as his mind's reach." (595)

"Entertain high thoughts. Eschew the rest." (596)

"Amidst an ambush of arrows, an elephant stands stubborn; so are the strong-willed amidst attacks." (597)

"The world is not for those who lack will power." (598)

"For all its girth and tusks, the elephant shudders at the courageous attack of a tiger. Size matters little." (599)

"Courage propels one into action; one who lacks courage is no different from a tree." (600)

As mind prompts action, Valluvar accords priority to mental energy as the spur to action. In short, he says energetic people inherit the earth. As a pro-active leader leads by his example, he spreads energy waves everywhere; there will not be any trace of sloth with those around him.

**19. Persevere**

Advising people to avoid sloth, Valluvar extols the gains of perseverance.

> "Never consider any task difficult. Perseverance helps you do it." (611)
>
> "Never give up tasks; the world abandons deserters." (612 )
>
> "The persevering alone could be proud philanthropists." (613)
>
> "Misfortune is no disgrace; not exerting is disgrace." (618)
>
> "Even tasks above divine caprice could be accomplished by those who exert themselves." (619)
>
> "The persevering shall turn destiny aside." (620)

The last two couplets embolden leaders to be exceptional achievers against all odds. Valluvar implies that the will and perseverance born of it can win everything.

**20. Stay within limits**

Valluvar cautions: There are tethers even for feathers. Don't stretch anything beyond its optimum capacity. This is a lesson for those who are prone to flog men or machines to their detriment.

> "On climbing a tree note the tethers, beyond that, it is sure death." (476)

Like things external, ambitions and exertions also have their limits. Driving one to an extreme in anything would cause fall. The couplet implies that a leader should have propriety, judgment and reticence in whatever he does. A vaulting ambition might ruin him. The is another important couplet in this chapter providing cues to the nuances of financial management.

> "Know your capacity to give and then give accordingly, to preserve your wealth." (477)

**21. Be generous, but note the limits**

No matter the income, keep expenditure within limits. One should mind the accrual, whatever be the quantum on hand.

"No harm even with measly accruals, if the expenditure does not exceed income." (478)

"The one who lives beyond his means perishes like his illusory plenty." (479)

"An inconsiderate generosity saps the giver and the stock." (480)

**22. Boulders do not a fort make**

Defense is a strategic area of rule. To that end forts help; but not these days. Territorial aggression mattered only in the past. Now the developed countries raise the invisible economic forts. Still, the spirit of defense remains and leaders have to take note of it. In the first nine couplets Valluvar describes the physical properties of forts. In the concluding couplet he says:

"Whatever be the excellence of a fortress, it is just nothing without men of great action." (750)

Men matter, not matter. A CEO or a leader is made to understand that all the physical assets of an institution would not amount to anything, without a strong and properly deployed human resource. Bravery counts far more than boulders. If anything, leadership is bravery.

**23. Imbibe the spirit of a warrior**

In a war-torn world all countries have a concern for spending for the army to augment weaponry. The defense budget is on the increase everywhere. At this juncture, it would be worthwhile to learn from Valluvar what are the quotients of *The Army Power* and *The Martial Pride.* As business is akin to war with regard to combating rivalry, military lessons hold good to the corporate sector too. Some of the postulates merit consideration when we discuss leader-ship, especially the last couplet of the Chapter *The Army power* which implies that leadership is strategically vital.

"Better have a cobra by your side than a band of rats. Number alone does not count." (763)

"Sense the opponents and lead the brigade to win wars." (767)

"The army will win if it is free from humiliation, disintegration and empty stomach." (769)

"Battalions may be many; but without leadership, they amount to nothing." (770)

**24. Note the importance of the location**

Valluvar who cited crow, owl and the heron earlier, to stress the importance of time, mentions here crocodile, chariot, elephant and jackal to underscore the importance of the vantage locations in encounters. However strong one is, he should sense the strategic importance of the location. That is what called *home turf* in the sports idiom. The chapter opens thus:

"Don't ridicule the opposition; don't start the offensive until you had chosen the right spot." (491)

Its explanation comes forth in the next couplet.

"Even to the strong, fortification has its own advantages." (492)

Power matters; prowess too matters. One may have both. Still to be fortified through external sources/means, is essential. A leader cannot remain complacent on the power and prowess of his own; he should also draw from external resources.

"The place strengthens the weak and weakens the strong." (493)

"An attack from the right place demoralises the opponent." (494)

"A crocodile wins in the depths of water; out of waters, it is won over by others." (495)

"A mighty chariot cannot brave the sea; nor can an oceanic vessel traverse the land." (496)

"Even a small army can take on a large one, at its vantage site. (498)

To succeed, one should realise whether he occupies his spot of strength and where the opponent has perched himself.

"Though unfortified and small, the home turf is unformidable." (499)

Size does not matter. Bigness in a wrong spot will not be gainful.

"Even a lone jackal can slay a war elephant, taking on lance- wielding men, if he is caught in a marshy locale." (500)

Leaders are advised to note the locale, their advantages there, the advantages to their adversaries and then act. What is told for war is true for politics and business too. In fielding candidates at elections, party heads consider these factors. Corporate chiefs also take into account regional factors in marketing their goods. There seems to be no better way of stressing the importance of the factors - time and place - than by *Kural's* imagery.

**25. In recruiting look into the antecedents, investigate**

This chapter is a Human Resources policy manual. Valluvar provides a code for recruitment and deployment. The selection criteria for personnel should include

"The way the prospects handle virtue, wealth, pleasure and life." (501)

"Trust a man hailing from a good family, free from faults, so modest as to be bashed of reproach." (502)

"A man might be learned, good-natured; still a scrutiny would reveal that he might not be free from a jot of ignorance." (503)

A jot of ignorance could be accepted and the same could be corrected, if a person is learned and good-natured. There is a helpful cue to leaders in choosing personnel:

"A leader shall weigh the prospect's merits and shortcomings and choose or reject by the major components." (504)

as minor deficiencies could be made good after the recruitment.

"A man's greatness is known by his deeds." (505)

It is implied that a man is not what he speaks, but what he does. The family is a binding factor. Even in villages the unlettered shudder to do anything evil, saying, "O, we have our children." Valluvar brings this out pertinently:

"Beware of trusting those men who have no kin. The unencumbered are unabashed of misdeeds." (506)

Family bond prompts one to dread doing anything evil. He fears that his misdeeds might boomerang on his progeny later.

"Nepotism shall not prompt one to recruit a dunce; engaged thereby is not a person, but a bundle of follies." (507)

Trusting one, without checking his *bona fides,* is to invite troubles for generations. Pre-recruitment investigation of the prospect will spare the leader of the post-employment agonies. Yet, having done proper investigation, the leader should trust the recruit. Says Valluvar:

"Trust none without investigation; having investigated, entrust the man with what he is trustworthy. " (509)

"Selecting one without scrutiny, and suspecting the one chosen after scrutiny will entail in endless troubles." (510)

**26. Deploy upon merits**

Even as the leader chooses the good and not the bad, the recruit should also be endowed with the quality to sift the good and bad. What holds good for employer also holds good for the employee. This is Valluvar's deft HR balancing act in the chapter *Testing and Employing Men.*

"The recruit shall tap all productive sources to avert losses. (512)

The following qualities be looked into in recruitment

"Love, wisdom, judgement and freedom from greed." (513)

"The position corrupts even the duly-chosen men" (514)

"Affection shall not be a placement preference." (515)

"For success a leader shall analyse the deed's proportions, the time factor and the one who can deliver goods." (516)

**27. Protect the personnel, by being idealistic**

As the modern corporate leader ranks with the ruler of the past, personnel of commercial institutions are akin to the subjects. Thus fostering the personnel has become the duty of a leader, regardless of several rungs of HR supervisors. It is the duty of a leader to function with smile, charity and kind words. The fourth quality that Valluvar adds is very important - *not to insult* any. (953)

The seat's majesty might invest arrogance in some. But leaders should avoid position-born arrogance and its offshoot, the tendency to insult others. The abundance of wealth or its depletion should not make leaders swerve from nobility. They will always remain noble. They never do anything wicked or treacherous. (956) As a blot of blame would be highly visible, they should be impeccable. (957) The noble man is known by his expressions. (959) and the leader shall always be humble. (960)

**28. Empower the staff**

A leader's job does not stop with recruitment and deployment. He must ensure empowerment. Delegation should not be faked.

"Having chosen a person, equip him to do the work." (518)

"A leader loses riches by suspecting his loyal deputies." (519)

The concluding couplet insists on periodical rating of the employees for greater benefit. Evaluation is important; still, it is different from interference. Leaders would do well to note this.

**29. Don't interfere**

A leader should not be meddlesome. The chosen one should be left to work on his own. Otherwise there would be displeasure and half-hearted performance. Post-recruitment supervision means the choice had not been good, or the instructions were not clear. Then the leader be faulted, not the worker.

"Having chosen one for a task, leave it for him to do it." (517)

**30. Don't be confounded by appearances/first impressions**

When delegated assignments go awry, placing the institution and the leader in predicament, if not in bewilderment, leaders regret their misplaced faith on the assignees. The earlier occasion of reposing of faith was prompted as the assignees, their companions, or deputies who posed as they were the right persons to deliver goods.

Valluvar tells: Evaluate people; don't be carried away by their looks. The cowl does not make the monk. The base passing for the good are identified in the concluding chapter of Book II *Porul.* Being imitators, the base cannot easily be identified. The normally serious Valluvar is laconic in comparing the base with wise and the celestial. Resuming seriousness, he says leaders should take cues to identify the base from the following descriptions:

> "They always lead the low." (1074)
>
> "The common denomination of the base is fear." (1075)
>
> "They drum up what they have overheard." (1076)
>
> "They are misers of the first order." (1077)
>
> "To the wise a word or two would do. But the base would have to be crushed like sugarcane for results." (1078)
>
> "They are jealous of those who eat well and dress well; they would try to foist on them a bad name." (1079)
>
> "During national exigencies, the low sell themselves." (1080)

However, the last couplet could also be interpreted that the base shall be disposed of first, when a nation faces an emergency. In the recruitment or deployment process, if a leader had erred through the first impressions of one, he would do well to spot the unworthy employees and fire them mercilessly during exigencies. Firing the burdensome is in the interest of the institution to retain and protect the loyalists. That is absolutely right by *Kural's* codes.

**31. Don't be carried away by pretenders**

"Pretence is no friendship. Avoid pretenders." (821, 822)

"Words shall not convince those not on your wavelength." (825)

"Embedded within the praying hands might be arms; so are veiled intents behind tears." (828)

These warnings apart Valluvar, cautions leaders as to not to take for granted anything and to pry into external appearances.

**32. May not familiarity prompt you to take undue liberties**

"Longer friendship gives room for taking liberties, which both sides have to exercise judiciously." (801, 802, 803, 804)

"Great men's sustaining ties with their friends shall evoke the admiration of even their adversaries." (810)

**33. Dare the distress**

There is will; there is also perseverance. Still, what to do when troubles snare at men? Valluvar's advice is very simple:

"Laugh away your distresses. Nothing conquers calamity better than daring." (621)

"Tide of troubles recede at the will of an intelligent man." (622)

"The unruffled trouble the troubles." (623)

"Tide over troubles as a buffalo hauls the cart over mire." (624)

"Heaps of distresses dissipate when one dares them." (625)

"Those who do not gloat over riches will not shed tears at penury." (626)

**34. Never say no**

Valluvar is curt in translating the charitable mind into a charitable hand. Many corporate houses run charitable trusts. Most of them have their norms clearly drawn

and panels well constituted. However, some trusts are covert tax havens, to park funds to please those who help promote their business directly or indirectly. That is no charity. The leaders who have a say in giving away funds in charity have to learn much from Valluvar:

"Any help to the poor is gift; the rest is quid pro quo." (221)

"Acceptance is bad, even by right means; giving is good, even while heaven is denied." (222)

"In charity the high-born never say no." (223)

"It pains to see the face of those who beg. Gone is the pain with the beneficiary's happy mien." (224)

"It is saintly to bear hunger; holier still is to feed the hungry." (225)

"The way to preserve wealth is to spend it to feed the poor." (226)

"Hard-hearted hoarders never know the joy of charity." (228)

"Nothing is bitter than death; even that is a pleasure when one is unable to give. (230)

**35. Know what a country is made of**

A country, says Valluvar, shall have: rich produce, erudite people, wealthy traders, copious harvest, no recourse to destruction, sufficient tax income, valiance to face enemies, resilience, adequate water resources, strong forts, cordiality between the ruler and the ruled besides freedom from such things as hunger, incurable diseases, enemies, fissiparous cliques, civil hostility and anti-social forces. Leaders shall ensure that their country is equipped with the aforesaid assets, not the debilities.

**36. Gather intelligence**

However, it is one thing to be kind and compassionate and quite another to be vigilant. The king/the leader cannot plant his eyes everywhere to monitor the affairs. He needs information on everything everyday. That is why he engages spies. In the corporate sector, it is termed 'business intelligence.'

### 37. Know the nuances of diplomacy

Like the chapter on Espionage, relevant even now, after 20 centuries, this one on envoys .holds good even in this electronic age. A paraphrasing:

"The envoys shall be of high birth, shall have love and geniality to move with kings." (681)

"Kindness, wisdom and considerate speech are the three prime requisites of an envoy." (682)

"The emissary to a mighty lance-wielding king shall be a scholar among scholars." (683)

"Select envoys upon their learning, wisdom and bearing." (684)

"The ambassador shall know what to tell, what not to tell and pleasantly tell what to tell to gain his ends." (685)

"A diplomat shall possess learning. persuasive eloquence and time-sensitivity to dare the wild scorn." (686)

"The best envoy is the one who knows his assignment and speaks in deference to the time and place." (687)

"An envoy shall represent his king with virtue, honesty and courage."(688)

"Boldness is no licence to say harmful words in a mission." (689)

"Ambassadorial asset is laying down life, when needed, for the sake of the king."(690)

Diplomacy is part of leadership. Leaders are ambassadors themselves; at times they have to engage emissaries. This chapter provides cues on engaging envoys and how to behave as diplomats. The repeatedly mentioned requisites are learning, wisdom, boldness, persuasive speech and willingness to die for the cause. Couplet 683 states that an envoy's sharp intellect should counter the lance of a valorous host king. Continuing the theme, discerning body language, Valluvar employs the same imagery of eyes in the chapter on 'Spies.'

"The eyes of a king are: espionage and erudition." (581)

"Gathering intelligence swiftly is a king's duty." (582)

"To win is to assess the intelligence reports of the spies. "(583)

"To be kept under surveillance are employees, relatives and known enemies." (584)

"An able spy assumes undetected disguise, behaves fearlessly when detected and holds on to his secrets." (585)

"Clad as monk, weighing well what happens, moves the master spy unidentified." (586)

"A spy shall trace hidden facts and verify their veracity." (587)

"Never buy a spy's words; set another spy to espy him." (588)

"Let not three informants know one another; look if their reports agree. " (589)

"Never pat spies openly; that is to lay bare the secrets."(590)

All the couplets specify the dimensions of gathering core intelligence, corroborative intelligence, counter intelligence, assessing reports, deploying and treating the spies. Any espionage mission can bank on this counsel. Lapses are to be attributed to slackness in counter intelligence measures and the dishonesty of the spies.

### 38. Know the ways of acquiring wealth

Valluvar highlights the importance of wealth in the first three couplets (751, 752, 753). In the fourth, eighth and the ninth (754,758, 759) he tells that only the wealth by the right means offers pleasures and ensures a virtuous standing for a leader. Towards the end of the chapter he speaks of adequacy of capital for ventures and that one's wealth humbles his enemies.

### 39. Be generous in apportioning wealth

"A righteous householder need not bother entering other ordained stages of life (quasi-asceticism and asceticism) per the Hindu dharma. "(46)

A householder should be conscious of his domestic and social obligations and lend patronage to those in the other stages (vide couplet 41) The Hindu pantheon ordains that only the householder shall earn by taking up employment. Those in the other three orders *Brahmacharya, Vanaprasta* and *Sanyasa* – students, quasi-ascetics and ascetics, are not expected engage themselves in any pursuit to earn money. Therefore only the householders, entitled to earn are obliged to support others financially. This reduces the burden and worries on the part of others in making money for their livelihood. In a changed society where being saffron-clad is a ploy for money spinning, the old connotation of asceticism loses its meaning. Still be it noted that Valluvar had hinted at leadership's corporate and social obligations.

**40. Strive for the society's progress**

Once a man assumes the role of a leader, he has to frame his mind to work for the society and goals beyond personal. He should feel that he belongs to the society.

> "Nothing is greater than steadfastness to strive for social uplift." (1021)
>
> "By perseverance, deep knowledge and untiring efforts one contributes to the growth of his institution and society." (1022)
>
> "God rushes to help one who swears to serve the society." (1023)
>
> "Only the able assume responsibility, as in the war." (1027)
>
> "A family - read institution - would perish upon distress, without a good man to lead." (1030)

## The following 17 are the avoidable Functions (thought-prompted)

**1. Don't be indolent**

How does a chapter on *Indolence* connect itself to leadership? The idle cannot be leaders. Enthusiasm and energy of the leaders are expected to be infectious. Much of the import here is for the individual, may be for a follower. Still leaders would do well to take note of what is couched in couplets 605, 606 and 610, so that they could easily spot the indolent, avoid them and gain thereby.

"Procrastination, forgetfulness, sloth and sleep place one on a wrecker vessel." (605)

"The languid gain little, even with the props of the wealthiest." (606)

"A king without indolence is entitled to immeasurable expanse." (610)

**2. Dread evil deeds**

Fear is one of the anthropological assets of human beings. The hesitation to do anything wrong is an evolved version of the primordial fear. Leaders are expected to cultivate the type of exalted fear; that prevents them from doing anything evil, even subconsciously. The consequence is development of personality of the leader and the undiminished common good of the society.

"The prime grain of wisdom is not to do evil even to enemies." (203)

"Never try to harm others even unconsciously. If you do, destiny will encircle you." (204)

"Poverty is no license to do evil; it would render one poorer."(205)

**3. Don't perpetrate evil**

Leaders should always think before they act; more so if their action would harm any; that they had been harmed is no justification to return harm. They should be charitable even to those who perpetrated harm; otherwise they lose their status as leaders; that is what Valluvar implies in this chapter.

"The pure minded do not harm others even for riches or renown." (311)

"Though harmed, the pure-minded do not retaliate." (312)

"Retaliation brings sorrows in its trail." (313)

"The best way of seeking revenge is to do good."(314)

"Harm others in the forenoon; have returns in the afternoon." (319)

**4. Don't offend the great**

"Do not belittle persons with prowess." (891)

Dire are consequences of offending the great. Stature, wealth and other things are lost. Humility obliges one not to offend.

**5. Keep ignoramuses away**

Let the ignorant be discarded. How to spot them? The traits:

"The poorest of the poor is not the one without riches, but one without wisdom."(841)

"The ignorant does not give." (842)

"He can cause more ruin to himself than what others could." (843)

"He pretends that he knows." (844)

"His pretence makes other doubt even his limited learning." (845)

"He cannot guard himself from harm." (846)

"He ignores advice." (847)

"He does not know anything himself, nor will he lend ears for others, he is a disease." (848)

"Himself a fool, he will stick to his stand and make a fool of the other who would try to put sense in him." (849)

"He is a ghost who denies what others accept." (850)

The same question, as of earlier occasion, arises here. What relevance does leadership have with ignorance, when the ignorant cannot any way be leaders? The corollary bears relevance. Leaders shall spot and isolate ignoramuses.

**6. Beware of bad friends**

"What does it matter if one gains or loses the friendship of the selfish?" (812)

"Better the enmity of the wise than friendship of the unwise." (816)

"Bitter even in dreams is the friendship of those whose words and deeds are in discord." (819)

"Forsake the friendship of those who are intimate in privacy and insinuating in public." (820)

Leaders, by roles and responsibilities, are obliged to move with many. Some in proximity might seek to show off in public their connections. They should be cautious in allowing such persons in the inner circle.

**7. Avoid improper conduct**

Personality is not external appearance but what one is within

"To have a pure mind is everything; the rest is of no consequence." (34)

Much the same said in the chapter *Truthfulness:*

"Don't go against your conscience. If you do, it would scorch you." (293)

"What does a tall image count, if one's heart pins him guilty?" (272)

"What counts is not physical appearance, but giving up what is despised by people."(280)

**8. Guard against faults**

Chapter 44 implies that leaders, who seek to punish others for the faults that they are subject to, will not be respected. The qualities that ensure leadership's dignity and ways and means to guard against faults are defined.

"One deserves dignity, if he is free from vanity, vulgarity and venomousness." (431)

"Avarice, dishonour and unbecoming mirth are flaws rendering a king (leader) unfit for his position." (432)

"Those who dread disgrace take even a grain of dishonour gargantuan." (433)

"Guard against faults, for, they are grave enemies."(434)

"One, not with preventive concern over affliction of faults, will be razed like a hayrick ablaze." (435)

"A leader who expunges his faults before examining those of others cannot be faulted." (436)

"Avarice saps wealth without the slightest vestige." (437)

"Never admire yourself. Never do anything that will not benefit others." (439)

"Be discreet in tastes and pursuits, to foil the wiles of foes." (440)

**9. Never gamble**

Valluvar takes only 20 lines for this subject, against cantos of Vyasa's epic. He lists the evils of gambling.

(i) Don't indulge in gambling, even if you can win.

(ii) The gain is transitory.

(iii) Losing is more often the reality.

(iv) It saps the wealth. Reputation is lost.

(v) Gain is the wish; loss is the result.

(vi) Fools are ensnared by gambling, which is real misfortune.

(vii) Time is lost, wealth is lost; ancestral assets are lost;

(viii) Honesty is cankered; benevolence dwindles; torment swells.

(ix) Fickle gain of gambling makes one forfeit raiment, riches, rations, renown and erudition.

(x) The gambler's passion increases with the losses incurred.

The fit despicable case is Yudhishtra of the *Mahabharata*.

**10. Avoid liquor**

Say they, when the wine is in, wit is out. A leader should avoid liquor because he is expected to be wise all through. What does one lose by taking liquor? (i) Reputation (ii) People's respect (iii) elders' esteem (iv) Mother's love and that of others (v) A sense of shame. The drunkard in stupor is not much different from the dead. He incurs the ridicule of the society.

**11. Avoid base company**

When a leader seeks the company of advisors, a coterie with personal agenda might sneak in. He should be shrewd enough to avoid such. Valluvar lists the traits of bad men in the chapter *Avoidance of Base Company*.

"The great dread the base; the low are swarmed by the base." (451)

"Man's company matters, as waters on the nature of the soil." (452)

"Feelings are born of one's mind and stature of his company." (453)

"One's wisdom is born of his influencing company." (454)

"Purity of mind and purity of actions rely on the purity of the company." (455)

"Good company ensures good actions, legacy and glory." (456)

"Mental health is society's wealth; a good company brings all that is good." (457)

"Nothing helpful like a good company and nothing harmful like a bad company." (460)

**12. Avoid slandering**

A study of successful leaders reveals that they never talk of ill of others; for them it is charity to all, malice to none. An instance 25 years ago, which this researcher was privy to, is worth narrating. Media reporters complained to G.L. Tandon, the then CEO of Neyveli Lignite Corporation, Neyveli, that the Public Relations Officer was worthless, in as many words as they could expend. Tandon defended his PRO saying, "There is nothing basically wrong with him; but you have to tell him only one thing at a time." Leadership is understanding one's deputy, deploying him for what he is worth and defending him against slander. The CEO handled his deputy without faulting him. He saved him from slander. That disposition is explained differently.

"One might not speak virtuously or do good; even then he merits consideration if he avoids slander." (181)

"Better die than live by slandering." (183)

"Dare one on his face; don't tell anything behind the back." (184)

"What would they be to strangers, when they slander even their friends?" (188)

"If one could spot his own faults, as he does of others, would there be any harm for any one?" (190)

**13. Don't kill any, for any gain**

Books like *The Art of War* by Sun Tsu explaining valour and strategies of warriors are being read by the West as leadership texts. But *Tirukkural* extols the virtues of non-killing as a leadership norm. It might sound different, but all the more relevant. Were he alive today, Tiruvalluvar might be averse to expressions like *cut-throat rivalry* and *killing competition*, for, he abhors the very thought of killing.

> "If there be just one virtue, it is non-killing; non-lying comes just behind it." (323)

The allowance granted by the modern penal code that one can kill others, in the exigency of being attempted at, is not acceptable to Valluvar. He says,

> "Don't kill any, even on the jaws of your death." (327)

**14. Abstain from eating meat**

In his sequencing Valluvar places the chapter on *Avoiding Meat Eating* (vegetarianism), closely following the one on *Compassion*. Says he,

> "How can one evince compassion if he feeds on flesh?" (251)
>
> "Spendthrifts cannot manage funds; a meat-eater cannot rule with mercy." (252)
>
> "The weapon wielding show no compassion, so are the minds of meat-eaters." (253)
>
> "The world will worship the one who does not kill, the one who does not eat meat." (260)

**15. Don't terrorise**

How does a leader mete out justice amidst varied and veiled offences? Valluvar provides s guidelines:

> "That king is great, who probes into offences impartially and pronounces a deterrent verdict." (561)
>
> "The one who seeks enduring wealth shall open punitive action harshly but strike mildly." (562)

"Lack of compassion, harsh words and excessive punishment tell upon a king's tenure and treasures." (564,565,566,567)

"The fury of a king faulting his ministers by hindsight will sap his wealth." (568)

**16. Don't amass wealth that benefits none**

Valluvar is categorical that creation of wealth is meant for proper utilisation. He chides miserliness. He presents powerful metaphors, which should be taken note of by everyone. Yet the one that has a direct appeal to leadership is this couplet.

"He who forsakes love and dharma to pile up riches loses it to others." (1009)

**17. Never be unjust**

The subsequent chapters, *Unjust Rule* and *Tyranny* prescribe the *don'ts* for rulers/leaders. The negative qualities that a ruler should eschew are listed. Valluvar is categorical in this regard.

"The king who rules unjustly and oppressively is more terrific than a hired assassin." (551)

"An extorting king is like a lance-bearing robber." (552)

"The king's delay in rendering justice ruins his country." (553)

"An inconsiderate king loses riches and loyalty of his subjects." (554)

"The tears of the oppressed anon drown the royal assets." (555)

"Right rule extends the term of governance." (556)

**The communication quotient of leadership - The Word is the wand**

Word expresses the thought and justifies the deed. It plays the magic of Aladdin's lamp or Damocles' sword. Even as the *Thought,* the *Word* matters - the *written* word, the *spoken* word and the *unspoken* word. In management jargon the world of words is called *Communication.* What Valluvar says on communication deserves a separate dissertation. Yet, communication is taken up here just as a leadership quotient.

**1. May your expressions reveal you**

"Erudition is reflected in one's expressions." (28)

Valluvar identifies an important quotient of leadership here – the speech. As he opens his mouth, the leader reveals himself. (This factor is covered at length in Chapter 10 *Speaking Pleasantly* and Chapter 65 *Eloquence.)*

**2. Be sweet-tongued**

As warm looks matter in hospitality, kind words count in interactions. Valluvar elucidates it here. Pleasant *Speech*. Each couplet presents an important aspect.

"Cultured expressions ensure righteous status and gains." (97)

"Words void of even veiled meanness yield happiness." (98)

"Pleasant words yield pleasantness. Why then should one go in for harsh words?" (99)

"Using unkind words when kind words abound is to go in for unripe fruits when ripe ones abound." (100)

Leaders who meticulously follow these norms would be cherished. On the other hand, foul-mouthed leaders breathing fire would be breaching etiquette. (That the foul-mouthed cannot be taken as leaders is a different thing.) The one with sweet speech can always have his way; he will not fall a prey to wiles and vilifications.

**3. Be eloquent**

All good speakers are not good leaders; but all good leaders are invariably good speakers. They have got to be, if they want to succeed. Communication is an important asset of leadership. Valluvar emphasises its myriad aspects:

"Of all assets, the speech is an incomparable one." (641)

"May you guard your words; they can bring in riches or ruin." (642)

"One should speak so well that his words keep the hearer spell-bound and prompt others to long for the same."(643)

"Judge the audience and speak to their capacity. "(644)

"Employ invincible words." (645)

"Let others be eager to hear you and benefit thereby." (646)

"A man may be courageous and untiring; if he is also an expert in communication, he will remain invincible." (647)

"The world is eager to hear the eloquent." (648)

"Those with a lust for words cannot be brief." (649)

"One who cannot elucidate what he has learnt is like a flower without fragrance." (650)

**4. Judge the audience**

Speakers matter, say those who get up functions, whereas speakers say, the members of the audience matter. Yet speakers should judge the audience before waxing their eloquence.

"Consider the standard of the audience." (711)

"May your words go in tune with the time and the place." (712)

"Strike identity with the audience as you speak." (713)

"Be modest in the presence of those more qualified." (715)

"Erring in expression before the erudite is falling in esteem." (716)

"If one can deliver well, his erudition will come to the fore." (717)

"The learned addressing an audience of thinkers is like irrigating nurseries." (718)

"Judge the capacity of the audience, the wise and the otherwise; speak accordingly." (719)

"Addressing the unfit is pouring nectar in a dump yard." (720)

Because of their position or eloquence, leaders are requested to address gatherings. Valluvar insists on the need to judge the audience; with some, the presentation could be interactive, with others it might be ineffectual.

**5. Don't dread the audience**

Cues are given here to those on the top echelons and those who want to reach there. Always bogged down with the burden of presentations and group discussions, they can take cues from *Kural.* Experts of this sort become leaders, commanding claps; the rest remain just clapping hands.

> "The artful speakers, addressing a learned audience, never flounder." (721)
>
> "Erudition is to elucidate one's learning acceptable to an erudite audience." (722)
>
> "Many brave battlefields; few brave an audience." (723)
>
> "Dinning is not presentation; it is also receiving the best from a learned audience through interaction." (724)
>
> "Be well-equipped to face questions from the audience." (725)
>
> "Swords are of no use to cowards. So are books for those who tremble before a discerning audience." (726)

**6. Scan the information and respond**

The information flow in any office is tremendous these days. Those holding responsive positions have to act on that flow, judging the veracity of every bit of information. Judgement is important in responding to information received from even the highly placed sources. Hence advises Valluvar:

> * Go into grains of truth, regardless of the nature of what is presented. (355)

Having acted upon false, prejudiced and wantonly distorted information one might regret his responses. They say they got misled. Would it not be wise to rate the veracity of information, whatever it was, and then respond?

**7. Be an avid listener**

This chapter *Listening* presents a vital component of leadership. Most commentators hold that *Listening,* as wealth through the ear, is an additional source

of learning, besides the formal one. So it is; but not just that. Taking *listening* as a substitute for learning or a supplementary epistemological source is a limited reading of *Kural's* intent. Involved and sympathetic listening educates even the learned. It makes them stay tuned. Patient hearing makes one affable. The capacity to listen to others, whoever they be, whatever be the circumstances, is an asset for leaders. Leadership experts lay emphasis on this. That is why Valluvar opens this chapter with the assertion:

"The most precious wealth is the one through the ear." (411)

"May the ear be fed before the stomach." (412)

Apparently, this couplet means that one can eat, provided he has no work for his ear. It could be said that even one is hungry, ready to take his food, he should listen to others, if they come to tell him something. A leader should not give inkling that he is hungry and that he would not listen. He should be willing to listen to anybody anytime, without getting irritated.

"Words of the upright are like a staff through a slippery tract." (415)

Leaders should listen to the right persons; that will steer them through sticky wickets. Because of their positions leaders normally tend to cultivate ego; that might dissuade them from listening to others. Some might feel that they are anointed to address others, never bound to listen. That is not leadership.

"Listening, besides learning, makes one stay humble." (419)

Humility, not power, nor arrogance, nor even conceit, is the hallmark of leadership. One, who listens to others and finds some thing more than he was given to understand earlier, feels humbled and he gains right perspectives on men and matters. That sort of listening is a commendable leadership quality.

"What does it matter if one lives or dies, if he trains his tongue for
eating and not his ear for knowing?" (420)

Thoughts and words are no stand-alone components; they contribute to deeds. Influenced by thoughts and words the deeds gain fame or notoriety. One should be cautious in deeds, more so the leaders and leader aspirants.

## Summary of Chapter III

# Leadership as Propounded in *Tirukkural*

The above chapter deals in three sections, the structure of *Tirukkural* and the quotients of leadership. The quotients are analysed under:

(i) Qualities of Head and Heart, those to be cultivated and those to be eschewed.

(ii) Functions,Transparent and Discreet, those to be followed and those avoidable.

The chapter that opens with qualities in man-making, mostly drawn from the book Virtue, contributing to one's leadership in any sphere, proceeds to concomitant quotients of leadership in political, social and corporate realms.

*Avoiding Meat* is approached not simply from health or economics angle but from the perspective of reverence for life.

What Tiruvalluvar tells on *Listening* is interpreted in the context of one giving a 'patient hearing' in management situations and interpreting information flow, much needed in the corporate world today. For the benefit of the corporate world, nuances of the couplets relating to recruitment, delegation, empowering and non-interference are interpreted to bear relevance to modern contexts in the modern idiom.

The section on the structure of the work touches upon the third book – Love Life. While the normal perception is that the private life of a person has little to do with the public, this thesis seeks to establish that one's behaviour as a spouse matters in his public affairs as well, especially if the person is a leader. His stature and visibility call for adherence to virtues in letter and spirit.

Misunderstanding with the spouse, irritable temper displayed at home and office out of that, the tendency to outstrip the marital confines, the disrepute born of it are to be avoided. For an individual it is essential tolead a peaceful life.

A leader is expected to function at home and in office as one and the same person, calm with a sense of equanimity. *A bad man but a good leader* is inconceivable; if he is one, he cannot be the other.

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# Chapter IV

## Leadership as Propounded in *The Mahabharata*

## Introduction to Chapter IV

# Leadership as Propounded in *The Mahabharata*

The six sections of this chapter identify the quotients of Leadership propounded in the epic *The Mahabharata.* They are categorized, listed and discussed as under:

The major portions of the epic that directly deal with leadership are:

1. Kanikavakya
2. Vidura Niti,
3. Bhagavad Gita, and
4. Bhishma's Raja Niti.

The six sections of this chapter discuss:

(i) The structure of the epic

(ii) The texts and contexts of exposition of leadership

(III) Minister Kanika's counsel to King Dhritarashtra, called Kanikavakya

(IV) Bhishma's Raja Niti, otherwise called Raja Dharma

(V) Vidura Niti, Vidura's counsel; to his elder brother King Dritharashtra, and

(VI) Bhagavad Gita, a metaphysical text. It is discussed as translated by Jack Hawley, an American commentator.

Leadership quotients are listed as Qualities of the Heart, Qualities of the Head; the ordained Functions are discussed as those Transparent and Discreet. Among them the cultivable and eschewable ones are identified so. Throughout the emphasis is that the qualities of the man in the leader makes one a good leader.

## Chapter IV

# Section 1: The Structure of the Epic - The *Mahabharata*

The Sanskrit epic *The Mahabharata*, with nearly a hundred thousand stanzas, carrying stories within stories, is a flashback in 18 cantos (parvas) on the feuding first cousins of a royal dynasty over devolution of powers among them. Messages on life, manhood, love, valour, virtue and a host of quotients of leadership are conveyed through numerous episodes, debates and counsels. The long epic is a well-knit work of stories within stories.

Its unravelling occasion is also anecdotal. Whether these stories were of Vyasa's own, or gathered from other sources including folklore, whether the author's real name was Vyasa or a given one as the Sanskrit term Vyasa means editor/compiler, whether the events narrated were part of history or sheer fiction, when and how long did Vyasa live and the related issues are beyond the purview of this research. The researcher's concern is leadership as propounded in the epic; nothing less and nothing more.

The protagonist who opens the epic Ugrasrava, surnamed Sauti, son of scholar Lomaharshana, is a mendicant story-teller. Meeting an assembly of ascetics at the Naimisha forest he asked them if they were interested in listening to the lore of Vyasa's stories, as related by Vaisampayana at King Janamejaya's court. Vaisampayana was Vyasa's disciple and Janamejaya was the grandson of Vyasa's grandson King Parikshit.

The following are the 18 *Parvas*, cantos, of the epic:

1. Adi Parva, 2. Sabha Parva, 3. Vana Parva, 4. Vrata Parva, 5. Udyog Parva, 6. Bhishma Parva, 7. Drona Parva, 8. Karna Parva, 9. Salya Parva, 10. Sauptika Parva, 11. Stri Parva, 12. Shanti Parva, 13. Anusana Parva, 14. Aswametika Parva, 15. Ashravasika Parva, 16. Mausala Parva, 17. Mahaprastanika Parva and 18. Swargaronika Parva.

(These *Parvas* have several *sargas*, sections carrying the plot forward.)

## Chapter IV

# Section 2: Texts and the Contexts in *The Mahabharata*

*The Mahabharata's* plot is woven around the theme leadership from its failure to success, through catharsis and nemesis.

Once on a stroll along the banks of Yamuna, king Santanu saw an exceedingly beautiful lady. She was from the fishermen community; the king fell in love with her and wanted to marry her. It was not easy. The lady's father imposed a condition that the king promised to crown the son born to her. Because King Santanu had a son, Devavrata, by his wife goddess Ganga, he did not accept the condition for matrimony and returned to the palace. Devavrata who found his father sad, learnt from a minister what was in his mind. He told his father he was willing to surrender his royal rights to his would be half brothers. He held a promise to the fisherwoman and her father that he would remain a celibate so that his progeny would not stake claim to the throne later. Thus were born of Santanu and the fisherwoman Satyavati the two sons Vichitraveerya and Chirtrangata. And now about Santanu:

If king Santanu had the requisite combination of a good man within a good leader, he would not have been enamoured of a fisherwoman and married her, denying his eldest son his lovely youth and the legitimate crown, to feed his own carnal cravings. Vichitraveerya and Chitrangata, Dhritarashtra and Pandu would not have been born then. The sagacious and valorous Bhishma would have become the king of the Kuru dynasty.

The first leader met in the epic, King Santanu, failed in his role as a man/father. Thus the epic opens with a king who failed in discharging his filial duties and proceeds with numerous other characters who demonstrate leadership's omissions and commissions.

The irony is, the failed king's son who declined the throne and remained a celibate imparts the king-to-be the quotients of leadership for a householder and ways of discharging royal duties. The king's failure from his personal angle affected the

nation and the citizens besides his progeny. Its spill over hit two generations and most part of the third generation. The epic's major players are: king Santanu's grandson, the blind king Dhritarashtra, his brother Vidura, his son Duryodhana, the five Pandava brothers, Yudhishtra, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva, their wife Draupadi, the sagacious warrior Bhishma, Lord Krishna, and the author Vyasa.

Lessons on leadership are ingrained in many episodes of the epic. The first specific reference to leadership is *Kanikavakya*, which could be taken more as provisions of emergency rule, than normal governance.

Kanika, a minister to Dhritarashtra, knew that the king sought his counsel only for concurrence to what he was musing. A mind reader for his own good, Kanika told king Dhritarashtra of the ruthless ways to tackle enemies. Kanika speaks out not ethics, nor his mind, but what his boss, given his moods and intents, wanted him to say. He considered it wise to gladden his boss, rather than guiding him. Directing him to good by sane advice was not his disposition then. Keen to hold to his office, without incurring the king's displeasure, Kanika did not bother to tell what was right or what was wrong. Only some portions are relevant beyond the context.

Contrarily, Bhishma's sermon on *Raja Niti* is not time-bound. It transcends the given context. Bhishma did not have narrow ulterior motives. He was not obliged to anybody in his dying days, nor earlier; though he could be faulted for not valiantly opposing the evil designs of king Dhritarashtra and his son Duryodhana. To the readers and researchers the context matters. Though *Vidura Niti* and the *Bhagavad Gita* are also contextual sermons, they stand out as independent didactic treatises

There are also other variables. Kanika did not appear to have taken to arms, except that he was an opportunist counsellor, currying the favour of the king. But Bhishma did take to arms in favour of the Kauravas, despite his soft corner for the Pandavas. His stomach and heart served different patrons. Vidura and Krishna were conversant with weaponry, but they did not bear arms in the Kurukshetra war. While Vidura remained unarmed, Krishna, chose to be an ethicist only at the start of the war, while parking his chariot at a vantage point on the battlefield to preach the *Gita*; once he started charioting, he turned out to be a strategist, whetting his disciple's valour.

The three occasions, Vidura's counsel to Dhritarashtra on man/leader and virtuous path - Lord Krishna's emboldening the dithering warrior Arjuna – and Bhishma's sermon to the reluctant Yudhishtra on being the right type of ruler, are crucial stages in the epic. The first is to avert war; the second is right on the battlefield and the third is after the war's heavy toll. These crucial contexts have their situational significance.

(i) On all occasions there is one addressor and one addressee. They are relatives, except in the case of Kanika.

(ii) The second is a private parley, between a blind king and his counsellor-brother. Only the two are present.

The hearer asks the teller as to — **What to do?**

(iii) The third is on the battlefield where a hesitant warrior is emboldened by the charioteer who is his brother-in-law. Many were around, and some within a hearing distance. The hesitant hearer asks – **Why to do?**

(iv) The fourth is a grandfather's sermon to his grandson. also one to one, though many were around. The hearer was the king-to-be, declining the throne; the giver was the king-to-have-been, who sacrificed his crown on a vow to serve his father's carnal desires and remained a celibate all along. The hearer submits – **I shall not do.**

Moods and responses vary; but there is universality in the sermons. King Dhritarashtra summoned his brother Vidura for counsel because his emissary Sanjaya did not disclose the outcome of his mission, the peace talks with the Pandavas, though it was a blatant breach of protocol. But the blind king had to bear it. Anxiety over the held-over information left him sleepless. He wanted somebody's company during those anxious moments. Vidura, his brother, was handy, residing close by. He thought summoning his brother would not evoke any curiosity anywhere at that juncture.

Further, Dhritarashtra was also eager to know if Vidura had been privy to the other end's affairs. His solicitous disposition - *what to do* - was feigned. So, when Vidura spoke, Dhritarashtra heard; did not listen to. Whoever had told him anything, Vidura or even God, the inwardly blind Dhritarashtra, who had an impermeable wall between his ears and mind, would not have cared to listen. His mind was genuine

night and it could not admit any ray of light. As it turned out, the *Vidura Niti* is of interest more to the reader than to the epic character who heard it. In contrast, Arjuna was genuinely interested in hearing Lord Krishna who delivered the *Bhagavad Gita.* Arjuna was in a mood to hear; he heard and adhered.

With regard to Bhishma's counsel, Yudhishtra, joined by his brothers, politely shot queries, having valiantly shot arrows on him in the foregone war. Everyone raptly listened to him on the duties of a man and a ruler. Though tinged with grief over the loss of life on either side in the 18-day war, the atmosphere was serene because the venerable sage, literally also in his last pins, lying on a bed of arrows, was giving a sermon on statecraft to the ruler-to-be who was denied of his dues for long. The time factor on the three occasions also calls for analysis. Once past the sleepless night, Dhritarashtra turned indifferent to the advice. The night folded up; the words of Vidura lapsed.

On the other hand, with the conches having been blown and the countdown on, when Lord Krishna energised Arjuna with his pep talk; his disciple was all ears. Matched with the teller's erudition was the taker's intellect to grasp the metaphysical truths. The third occasion was more pathetic and poignant than the preceding two. It was the end of a beginning and the beginning of an end. The seeker of advice and his brothers were grief-stricken, having lost their near and dear; the giver of the sermon was virtually on his deathbed.

This portion of the epic on leadership commands more *slokas* than the rest. Full of Bhishma's sermons, the epic's plot does not progress much in the Shanti Parva and Anusana Parva. The subject touched upon – the statecraft - conditioned the length and pace of this section of the epic. Despite his own discomfort, the sermoniser related in his own leisurely pace, fables and anecdotes. Yudhishtra was intelligent enough to grasp what was told; yet there were others among the hearers to whom Bhishma wanted his sermon intelligible. Further he touched upon leadership's supportive quotients too, which also needed a fictional format, to be intelligible to others.

The fictional part also bears relevance to the modern audience. An ensemble is given towards the close of this thesis, with associated ideas from modern writers.

## Chapter IV

# Section 3: Ruthless Leadership, Kanika's Tactics

Of the critical context of Kanika's counsel literary critic Krishna Chaitanya who has done an excellent character study of the personae in the epic, beased upon Vyasa's verses and their implications, comments,

> "He (Dhritarashtra) becomes very jealous of them (his nephews). He does not consult Vidura, his brother and chief minister, but calls a Machiavellian junior minister, Kanika. Since his very opening remark admits his jealousy about the increasing prosperity of the Pandavas, Kanika understands that the king no longer identifies himself with his nephew and heir-apparent and gives the advice which he knows would be to the liking of the monarch."[1]

Krishna Chaitanya exposes both Dhritarashtra and Kanika as seeker and giver of advice. Most counselors are prone to tell their principals not what is right, but what is desired. Asked of strategies, Minister Kanika tells Dhritarashtra thus:

> "Kings should ever be ready with uplifted maces, to strike when necessary. They should ever increase their prowess.
>
> "Carefully avoiding all faults themselves, they should ceaselessly watch over faults of their foes and take advantage of them.
>
> "If the king is always ready to strike, everybody fears him. Therefore the king should ever have recourse to chastisement in all he does.
>
> "He should so conduct himself that his foe may not detect any weak side in him. But, if he detects weakness in his foe, he should pursue him to destruction.
>
> "He should always conceal his means and ends like the tortoise concealing its body. He should always keep his own weakness unperceived by others.
>
> "And having begun a particular act, he should ever accomplish it thoroughly. Behold a throne, if not extracted wholly, it produces festering sore.

"The slaughter of a foe who does thee evil is praise-worthy. If the foe is of great prowess one should always watch for the hour of his disaster and kill him without any scruples.

"If he should happen to be a great warrior, his hour of distress also should be watched and he should be induced to fly. The enemy should never be scorned; however, contemptible."[2]

Kanika who seems harsh is practical and apparently without scruples. His call for readiness on the part of the leader to strike cannot be faulted. Striking comes only when one is attacked or about to be attacked.

That is why nations keep their armies in preparedness. While a leader should avoid faults is a valid advice for virtue, noticing the fault of the enemy is a strategy.

To chastise is an ordained duty of the king. The leader should not have any weakness. If he has any, he should so conduct himself that his enemies do not perceive them. That is a valid point.

Kanika wants the king to be secretive, wait for the right time to vanquish his enemy. That is also not wrong. An action taken must be pursued to the end. This is acceptable.

The finale is noteworthy. Says Kanika,

"The enemy should never be scorned; however, contemptible."

It is one thing to challenge the enemy in war, another to scorn him. To scorn is to cause mental agony. Kanika shrewdly states that insulting an enemy is more dangerous than injuring him; hence it should be avoided.

Modern leaders shall note this in handling their rivals. The implied, missing and unsaid aspect is that the action pursued should have been contemplated and the means to pursue should be righteous.

Kanika tells Dhritarashtra tactics and not didactics.

## Chapter IV

# Section 4: Bhishma's Sermon on Leadership

Bhishma is a venerable but curious combine of a sage-cum-warrior. He was born to King Santanu and goddess Ganga. But for the vow he took to remain a celibate to please his father's non-royal second wife, to give way for her progeny to rule the land, he was to have been the king in place of Pandu or his brother Dhritarashtra. Still, Bhishma remained the clan's prime warrior, teacher of martial arts and the grandmaster. He threw his lot with king Dhritarashtra and his sons before and during the war. Yet, he had a soft corner for the Pandavas and a special liking to the eldest, Yudhishtra, who much like him, was both *sattvic* and *rajasic* - wise and valorous.

The Pandavas won the war. Duryodhana and his brothers, including Karna, half-brother of the Pandavas, were killed. The rule of the land, long overdue for the Pandava brothers, was passed on to them as the war's gain. Having lost his relatives Yudhishtra declined the bloodstained throne. After performing rituals for the dead kith and kin, the grief-stricken Yudhishtra chose to decline the throne. Then Bhishma advised him not to take to renunciation, as that would be shirking his responsibility as a leader. He added,

> "It has been laid down that a life of renunciation should be adopted only in times of distress, by kings overcome with decrepitude or defeated by foes." [3]

Worst of all, the grievously wounded Bhishma was on a bed of arrows. He held his breath because of a boon enabling him to lay down his mortal coil as and when he wished.

It was then that he gave the sermon on statecraft – *Raja Niti.*

Though the seeker of advice was Yudhishtra and the master was Bhishma, the post-war situation turned out to be different. On the earlier occasions - Vidura's counsel to his brother and Krishna's advice to Arjuna, there were only two, the teller and the hearer. The Bhishma *upadesa* occasion was to be different. Besides the

master and the disciple, many had gathered around, eager to hear the sermon. Others too shot questions at Bhishma.

There is yet another difference. On the earlier occasions the sermonisers, Vidura and Krishna, like Bhishma, were *sattvic* and *rajasic*. However, both had taken vows not to take to arms, for different reasons. Bhishma, on the other hand, was the Field Marshal of a large army that braved the Pandavas; yet the dying old man spoke on ideal leadership, armoured by virtues.

To follow General Bhishma through *Shanti Parva* is to allude to several episodes and fables. The oft-quoted passage on rulership is Bhishma's 36-point manifesto for kings. He dwells at length subsequently on the same components. His self-explanatory manifesto for kings is applicable to modern leaders of the boardrooms and legislatures too. It presents the factors contributing to one's personality development covering duties and responsibilities.

**Bhishma's 36-point manifesto for kings**

1. A king should observe his duties without wrath or malice.
2. He should not abandon kindness.
3. He should have faith.
4. He should acquire wealth without persecution and cruelty.
5. He should pursue pleasure without attachment.
6. He should with cheerfulness, utter what is agreeable, and be brave without brag.
7. He should be liberal, but should not make gifts to persons that are unobserving.
8. He should have prowess without cruelty.
9. He should make alliance, avoiding those that are wicked.
10. He should not act with hostility towards friends.

11. He should never employ persons not devoted to him as his spies and secret agents.
12. He should never obtain his objects by persecution.
13. He should never disclose his purposes before persons that are wicked.
14. He should speak of the merits of others but never his own.
15. He should take wealth from his subjects but never from those that are good.
16. He should never employ or take the assistance of persons that are wicked.
17. He should never inflict punishment without careful enquiry.
18. He should never disclose his counsels.
19. He should give away, but not to persons that are covetous.
20. He should repose confidence on others but never on those that have injured him.
21. He should not cherish malice.
22. He should protect his wedded wives.
23. He should be pure and should not always be melted by compassion.
24. He should not indulge much in female companionship.
25. He should take food that is wholesome and never that which is otherwise.
26. He should without pride pay regards to those that deserve them, and serve his preceptors and seniors with sincerity.
27. He should worship the Gods without pride.
28. He should seek prosperity, but never do anything that brings infamy.
29. He should wait (upon his seniors) with humility.
30. He should be clever in business but should wait for the proper time.
31. He should comfort men and never send them away with empty speeches.

32. Having favoured a person he should not abandon him.

33. He should never strike in ignorance.

34. Having slain his foe, he should never indulge in sorrow.

35. He should display temper, but should never do so when there is no occasion.

36. He should be mild but never to those that have offended. [4]

Other leadership traits advocated by Bhishma like compassion, righteous-ness, love, modesty, charity, sweet-speech, bravery, friendship, espionage, and trust are listed under *Thought* and *Word* and *Deed* in the following pages.

## Leadership's *Qualities* and *Functions*

While explaining to Yudhishtra the code of governance, *Raja Niti*, Bhishma touches upon at length the quotients of Thought, Word and Deed. Under *Thought* covering the *Heart* and *Head* he lists the following five cultivable qualities (*heart*): modesty, capable desires, loyalty, compassion and charity and points out two eschewable qualities: malaise and slander. Bhishma's list of the qualities of *head* is longer. The following are the twelve cultivable qualities: learning, wisdom, judgement, self-control, impartiality, foresight, forethought, truth, patience, resoluteness, righteousness and honour. The eschewables (head) are three: ignorance, covetousness and pretension.

Under *Functions* - deeds good for rulers - *Bhishma* lists the following twelve: discharging duties, being proactive, counsel from elders, scriptures, scrutiny, strategy, promptitude, recruitment, handling enemies, reposing trust, espionage and right governance. *Functions* that do go good to others are five: fostering unity, chastising, mildness, creation of wealth and financial management. *Functions* that cause bad turns for a leader are three: shirking duties, indulging in petty disputes and unmerited sternness. Being sweet-tongued is the prime mode of communication insisted upon.

A hundred quotes on leadership selected from Bhishma's sermon in the words of translator Kisari Mohan Ganguli, are taken up for analysis under 44 heads - *Qualities*

(22) and *Functions* (22). Of the 22 qualities that Bhishma prescribes for leaders, seven are heart-based and 15 relate to the head.

**Qualities of the Heart**

Modesty, Capable Desires, Loyalty, Compassion, Charity and being free from Malice and being free from Slander.

**Qualities of the Head**

Keep learning, Winning over ignorance, Having intelligence, Wisdom, Judgement, Resolution, Self-control, Impartiality, Foresight, Forethought, Being truthful, Avoiding pretences, Being patient, Resoluteness and Righteousness.

With Bhishma the head scores over the heart. Naturally. He was not a householder, but he gave sane advice on the duties of a householder, the home to be illuminated by the right type of wife and the responsibilities of a father.

All his leadership quotients emanated only from his head, as he was a resolute sage whose heart was at the command of his head.

Says he of his sermon:

> "The code of right living in which I have instructed you is not derived only from the Vedas. It has been arrived at by personal experience through awareness of the world and through reason. One cannot fulfill the trajectory of one's life by merely acting according to the prescriptions in books. The way of integrity dawns in the reason. One has to think deeply about good and bad and adhere finally to the good."[5]

Roman numerals in this list of Quotes from Shanti Parva refer to the epic's section numbers and Arabic ones to Page numbers in Ganguli's translation.

**Qualities of Heart**

**1. Be Modest**

That virtue, in consequence of which an intelligent man, contented in mind and speech, achieves many goods and never incurs the censure of others, is called modesty. (CLXIII – 353) 1

**2. Entertain capable desires**

Desire, which is incapable of gratification, cannot, in deed, be filled in the course one's whole life. (XVI – 30) **2**

**3. Be loyal, command loyalty**

A king can conquer the whole earth with the help of even a small force, if that force be loyal, cheerful and devoted to good. (CXXXII – 284) **3**

**4. Be compassionate**

Behaving with kindness towards even the children in the womb, make thy subjects glad and happy and rule the earth. (XXXIII – 70) **4**

**5. Be wisely charitable**

The duties of domesticity are observed by persons practicing charity by abstaining from injuries of all kinds, by casting off desire and wrath, by being engaged in protecting all creatures, by observing the excellent duty of charity. (XIX-34) **5**

If a gift be made out to one who always accepts gifts, or to the one that is possessed of pride, that gift becomes bootless like clarified butter that is poured upon a forest conflagration. (XVIII – 33) **6**

There are the two faults connected with wealth even when acquired, viz., gift to an undeserving person and abstaining from giving unto him that deserves.

(XXVI – 48) **7**

**6. Cast aside malice**

In behaving with his subjects, he should always be free from malice.

(CXL – 312) **8**

**7. Keep away from slander**

Slander should never be spoken; if spoken, should never be heard and when slanderous converse goes on, one should close one's ears and leave the place outright. Slanderous converse is the characteristic of wicked man. It is an indication of depravity. (XXXII – 285) **9**

## Qualities of the Head

### 1. Take to true learning

The man of true knowledge should find out for himself the morality laid down for good. (CXLII – 321) **10**

Those decrying knowledge of others proclaim the superiority of their own knowledge. They have words for their weapons and words for their arrows. They are traders in learning and *rakshasas* among men. (CXLII - 321) **11**

### 2. Beware of the consequences of ignorance

Ignorance is the spring of misery. Ignorance has its origin in covetousness. (CLIX – 348) **12**

### 3. Do not covet

From covetousness proceeds wrath; from covetousness flows lust, and it is from covetousness that loss of judgement, deception, pride, arrogance, and malice, as also vindictiveness, shamelessness, loss of prosperity, loss of virtue, anxiety, and infamy spring, miserliness, cupidity, desire for every kind of improper act, pride of birth, pride of learning, pride of beauty, pride of wealth, pitilessness for all creatures, malevolence towards all, mistrust in respect of all, insincerity towards all, appropriation of other people's wealth, ravishment of other people's wives, harshness of speech, anxiety, propensity to speak ill of others, violent craving for the indulgence of lust, gluttony, liability to premature death, violent propensity towards malice, irresistible liking for falsehood, unconquerable appetite for indulging in the passions, insatiable desire for indulging the ear, evil-speaking, boastfulness, arrogance, non-doing of duties, rashness, and perpetration of every kind of evil act, - all these proceed from covetousness. (CLVIII – 346) **13**

### 4.May wisdom stand by you

No man would ever be called wise if he is indulging in pride. (XXXVII – 75) **14**

A person of wisdom and deep intelligence does not stand in the need of counsels or instruction. (CXX – 258) **15**

Kings should gather wisdom from various sources. (CXLII – 320) **16**

A ruler possessed of wisdom should frustrate all the endeavours and objects of his enemies. (CXX – 260) **17**

Real wisdom is never to be angry with creatures. (CL- CLI – 331) **18**

A weak-minded king can never display wisdom. (CXLII – 320) **19**

**5. Be perfect in your judgment**

The king should be well versed in the arts of conciliatory policy, he should be possessed of wisdom, and should be able to do what should be done and avoid what should not. (CXX – 258) **20**

**6. Have self-control**

There is only one fault with self-control. No second fault is noticeable in it. A person who has self-control is regarded as weak and imbecile. (CLXI – 351) **21**

**7. Always be impartial**

With thorough impartiality, he should practice the qualities of goodness if he is to earn felicity. (CXX - 257) **22**

**8. Have foresight**

He should always be heedful in respect of those gates through which dangers may come and overtake him. (CXX – 257) **23**

A king should ascertain all future dangers, when they are present, he should conquer them. (CXL – 311) **24**

**9. Act with forethought**

These two, the person of foresight and the person of presence of mind have been declared by the *rishis* to be the foremost of men. (CXXXVII - 292) **25**

**10. Observe truth**

Righteousness and power associated with truth can rescue men from peril. (CXXXIV – 288) **26**

One should always practice forgiveness and devotedness to truth. (CLXIII– 353) **27**

**11. Avoid pretences**

Having shaved their heads clean and adopted the brown robe, men may be seen to betake themselves to a life of wandering mendicancy, though bound by various ties though ever on the look out for bootless wealth. (XIX - 314) **28**

**12. Demonstrate patience**

A king possessed of patience and without any fault, may, if he likes, obtain the fruition of all his wishes, with the aid of even a small force. (CXX – 259) **29**

**13. Be resolute**

How can happiness be had from despondency? Objects may be won by resolution. (CLIII- 337) **30**

**14. Always be righteous**

That which is morality and duty is righteousness. (CXX –264) **31**

Righteousness sometimes takes the shape of unrighteousness. The latter also sometimes takes the shape of the former. Comprehend the circumstances under which righteousness and its reverse become confused. (CXLII - 320-321) **32**

**15. Lead an honourable life**

A life of humiliation and reproach is like death itself. (CXXXIV–288) **33**

A life of infamy is equal to death. (CXX – 269) **34**

## Functions of a leader

**1. Be conversant with your duties**

Duty must spring from understanding. (CXLII –320) **35**

Those persons that are observant of their duties that practice excellent vows and are truthful in speech become objects of great respect in the world, with their own faith exceedingly strengthened. (XI – 19) **36**

A king conversant with his duties should assume many forms even as a peacock puts forth plumes of diverse hues. Keenness, crookedness, truth and sincerity are the qualities that should be present in him. (CXX – 257) **37**

**2. Be pro-active**

One should betake oneself to action. The man reft of action can never obtain success. (XI –17) **38**

Aided by that intelligence which is sharpened by the scriptures, one can settle his courses of action. (CXX 258) **39**

The king should always exert for acquiring greatness. (CXXXIII–266) **40**

**3. Shirking is not renunciation**

It has been laid down that a life of renunciation should be adopted only in times of distress, by kings overcome with decrepitude or defeated by foes. (XI–16) **41**

**4. Be simple in food habits**

Simple food and drink obtained without effort and luxurious food procured with fear widely differ from each other. (CXI -P.242) **42**

**5. Seek the guidance of elders**

He must assume that particular hue or form which is beneficial in view of the particular object, which he seeks to accomplish. (CXX –257) **43**

Thou should accomplish all those high duties, which thy seniors and preceptors would indicate. Thou art sure to obtain great blessing through the grace of thy seniors and preceptors. (CXX–269) **44**

**6. Scrutinise before you decide**

By judging of different courses of action in his own mind, he should, by exercising his own intelligence arrive at conclusion. (CXX – 258) **45**

One that does everything after reflection and scrutiny, one that avails himself of proper means for the accomplishment of one's objects, always succeeds in achieving much. (CXXX VIII – 293) **46**

**7. Be guided by scriptures**

That king who, guided by an understanding based upon the scriptures and disregarding lust and wrath, behaves impartially, like a father towards all his subjects never incurs sin. (XXIV – 43) **47**

**8. Have promptitude**

Thou should always exert promptitude, for without promptitude of exertion, mere destiny never accomplishes the objects cherished by kings. (LVI – 114) **48**

The man of procrastination is lost. (CXXXVII – 291) **49**

**9. Be wise in recruitment, placement and promotion**

May a king succeed in subjugating the whole earth if he has for his ministers men possessed of courage, wisdom, great learning and high birth. (CXIX – 256) **50**

Ministers should be appointed for offices for which they are fit and should possess such qualifications needed for their respective occupations. (CXIX 255) **51**

By dismissing a servant who is incompetent to render service one is not bounded by sin. (XXXV –72) **52**

A king who desires to possess accomplished servants should never appoint persons that are destitute of intelligence, that are low-minded, that are without wisdom, that are not masters of their senses and that are not of a high birth.

(CXIX –256) **53**

Kings never entertain a servant that is destitute of learning and sincerity and wisdom and great wealth. Those men that are devoted to the services of their master are never stopped by any impediments. (CXIX -256) **54**

Persons that are possessed of humility, ready in the performance of their duties, tranquil in disposition, pure in mind, adorned with diverse gifts of nature and are never the objects of calumny in respect of the offices they hold should be the immediate associates of the king. (CXIX – 256) **55**

Kings should always speak in soothing terms unto those servants that are always engaged in doing good to their master (CXIX-256) **56**

Beholding his servants employed in acts which each is fit, the king should act in conformity with all of them like the strings of a musical instrument stretched to proper tension, according to their intended notes. (CXX - 258) **57**

Servants should according to ordinance be appointed to offices for which each is fit. That foolish king who, transgressing precedent, appoints servants to offices for which they are not fit, fails to gratify his people. (CXIX - 256) **58**

A king who confers on his servants offices for which each is fit, succeeds in consequence of such merit, to enjoy the happiness attaching to sovereignty. A Saraba should occupy the position of a Saraba, a lion should dwell with the might of a lion, a tiger should be placed in the position of a tiger; and a leopard should be placed as a leopard. (CXIX-255) **59**

Men that are honest, possessed of high birth, brave, learned, destitute of malaise and envy, high-minded be appointed as ministers. (CXIX 256) **60**

A lion should always make a companion of a lion. If one that is not a lion becomes the companion of a lion, one earns all of the advantages that belong to a lion. That lion, however, while engaged in discharging the duties of a lion, has a pack of dogs, only for his associates, never succeeds in cones-quence of such companion-ship, in accomplishing those duties. (CXIX-256) **61**

**10. Protect your staff from disintegration**

He should protect his ministers from disunion and destruction (CXL 313) **62**

**11. Be judicious in penal action**

Chastisement is at the root of everything. Upon chastisement rests the heaven that men desire, and upon it rest this world too. (XV – 27) **63**

If the king be regarded as competent to wield the rod of chastisement he should be regarded as equally competent to pardon. (XXIII - 41) **64**

The king must assume that particular hue or form which is beneficial to in view of the particular object, which he seeks to accomplish, keenness when he punishes and harmlessness when he shows favour. (CXX –257) **65**

**12. Avoid petty disputes**

The kings should never indulge in fruitless disputes. (CXL 12) **66**

**13. Handling foes**

There is no separate species of creatures called foes or friends. Persons become friends or foes according to the force of circumstances. (CXL 312) **67**

The king should always honour the foes of his foes. (CXL 311) **68**

When the roots of a tree are cut away, how could the branches live? A king possessed of wisdom should cut away the very roots of his foe. He should then win over and bring under his sway the allies and partisans of that foe. When calamities overtake the king he should without losing time counsel wisely, display his prowess properly, fight with ability and even retreat with wisdom. In speech only should the king exhibit his humility, but at heart he should be sharp as a razor. He should cast off lust and wrath and speak sweetly and mildly. When the occasion comes for intercourse with an enemy, a king, possessed of foresight should make peace, without reposing blind trust on him. When the business is over, he should quickly turn away from the new ally. One should conciliate a foe with sweet assurances as if he were a friend. One, however, should always stand in that fear of that foe, as living in a room within which there is snake. (CXL – 310) **69**

One should bear one's foe on one's shoulders as long as time is unfavourable. When, however, an opportunity has come, one should break him into fragments like an earthen jar on a stone. (CXL 310) **70**

Having incurred the animosity of a person possessed of knowledge and wisdom, one should not draw comfort from the conviction that one is at a distance from the foe. (CXL – 313) **71**

That should not be sought to be crossed which is really uncrossable. That should not be snatched from the foe, which the foe would be able to recover.

(CXL – 313) **72**

An insignificant foe when he becomes powerfully exterminates a king.

(CXX-259) 73

A foe becomes a friend and a friend becomes a foe. The course of human actions, through the combination of circumstances, becomes very uncertain.

(CXXXVIII-293) **74**

One should never strike him whose head one wouldn't cut off. (CXL – 313) **75**

The king should never disregard foes for their powerlessness. (CXX–259) **76**

**14. Know mildness is a virtue and a strategy**

By mildness should the mild be cut. By mildness one may destroy that which is fierce. There is nothing that mildness cannot effect. For this reason mildness is said to be sharper than fierceness. That king who becomes mild when the occasion requires mildness and who becomes stern when sternness is required succeeds in accomplishing all his objects and in putting down his foes. (CXL - 313) **77**

**15. Sternness is not always a virtue**

The king who commences with sternness burns the whole world.(CLII -332) **78**

**16. Be sweet but discreet in your speech**

He should conceal his counsel; he should speak little, and the little he speaks should be sweet. (CXX –257) **79**

Sweetness of speech never fails of its purpose while at the same time it never pains any heart. Even gifts not made with agreeable speeches do not delight the recipient. (LXXXIV – P. 185) **80**

**17. Be wary in reposing trust**

A prudent king will never repose his confidence upon one individual, however much accomplished. (XXIV –43) **81**

The king should not trust the person that does not deserve to be trusted nor should he trust too much the person that is deserving of trust. (CXL 312) **82**

**18. Create wealth**

Kings should always with great care look after their treasuries. Indeed, kings have their roots in the treasuries. A king should always seek to swell his treasury. (CXIX -256) **83**

All great kinds of meritorious acts flow from the possession of great wealth like a mountain from wealth springs all religious acts, all pleasures. (IX –12) **84**

Good deeds are very rare in those that amass riches. (XXVII 49) **85**

If a person becomes destitute of wealth, he becomes destitute of virtue and pleasure which objects are obtainable by wealth. (CXX-260) **86**

Steadiness, cleverness, self-restraint, intelligence, health, patience, bravery and attention to the requirements of time and place - these are eight qualities that lead to increase of wealth, be it small or much. (CXX - 259) **87**

Let thy barns be filled with corn. And let their keep be entrusted to honest servants. Seek to increase thy corn and wealth. (CXIX – 256) **88**

In seasons of distress, however, one's duties are of a different kind. The king, therefore, in seasons of distress incurs no fault by oppressing his subjects for filling the treasury. (CXXX281-282) **89**

**19. Be an expert in financial management**

A king conversant with the ways of acquiring wealth should always employ in his acts such men as are mild in disposition, possessed of wisdom and courage and great strength. (CXX–258) **90**

Even when he hears that his income and expenditure are great, he should not disregard the small items. (CXX–259) **91**

The king who fills his treasury by having recourse to fraudulent devices, certainly falls away from righteousness. (CXXXIII–285) **92**

The treasury cannot be filled by acting with purity and righteousness, nor by acting with heartless cruelty. It should be filled by adopting a middle course. (CXXXIII –286) **93**

The treasury must be filled, it should be carefully protected by putting a stop to all useless expenditure and even sought to be increased. (CXXXIII – 287) **94**

The unpaid balance of a debt, the unquenched remnant of a fire and the unslain remnant of foes, repeatedly grow and increase. Debt, which always grows is certain to remain unless wholly extinguished. Same are defeated foes and neglected maladies. (CXL – 313) **95**

**20. Choose the right spies/envoys**

The king should take his own spies as agents employed by his foes. The king should see that his own spies are not recognized by his foe. He should make spies of atheists and ascetics and send them to territories of his enemies. (CXL -311-312) **96**

The envoy should possess these seven accomplishments – he should be high-born, of a good family, eloquent, clever, of sweet speech, faithful in delivering the message, which he is charged and endues with a good memory. (LXXXIV. P. 187) **97**

**21. Right governance brings no reproach**

The king who does not protect his subjects, whose passions are ungovernable, who is full of vanity, who is stained with haughtiness and malaise, incurs sin and earns the reproach. (XXIV–43) **98**

**22. Gain glory through fortitude**

He is the best of kings whose conduct even after his death, is applauded by inhabitants of the city and country and by his counselors and friends. (XXVI – 47) **99**

That virtue owing to which one remains unchanged in happiness and misery is called fortitude. That wise man who desired his own good always practices this virtue. One should always practice forgiveness and devotedness to truth. That man of wisdom who succeeds in casting off joy, fear and wrath succeeds in acquiring fortitude. (CLX 11 – 353) **100**

## Chapter IV

# Section 5: *Vidura Niti*: The Values of Leadership

Like the *Bhagavad Gita, Vidura Niti*, part of *The Mahabharata* is taken in isolation, read and imparted because of its didactic import. The sagacious Vidura is the younger brother of king Dhritarashtra. His counsel to his elder brother is called the *Vidura Niti*. It calls for ethical values in ruling a country.

Vidura mentions the following ten are cultivable Qualities of leadership, prompted by head and heart: wisdom, intelligence, judgement, patience, self-control, humility, equanimity, righteousness, endurance and tolerance. The 14 eschewable qualities are: anger, theft, womanising, infidelity to friends, pride, folly, insolence, treason, base company, sleep, fear, indolence, procrastination and quarrelsomeness.

As for *Functions* that do good to a leader and others, Vidura's list covers the following: taking healthy food, being cautious and discreet in expressions, realising the importance of time, place, perseverance, creation of wealth, sharing wealth, wise counsel, being discreet, handling foes and espionage.

**Vidura, an incarnation of *Dharma***

Vidura is the younger brother of king Dhritarashtra, living under his care. As he was soft to the five Pandava brothers on moral grounds, the enraged Duryodhana once insulted him,

> "You have your belly for our palace and your heart for the Pandavs."[6]

Vidura was cursed to suffer such an insult. So it came to be: Vidura was born to the author of the epic, Vyasa and a palace maid over a conjugal exigency. Vyasa was fisherwoman Satyavati's son through sage Parasara who wanted to get at what he considered a holy time to beget an erudite son. So was born Vyasa, Bhishma's half-brother. Born black in a lonely island, he was named Krishna Dwaipayana. Vyasa is the name he acquired later because of his career as a composer/compiler/editor.

When King Vichitraveerya's young widows Ambika and Ambalika, were obliged to procreate with the brother of the deceased king, to perpetuate the royal lineage per

the custom, the king's brother, Bhishma declined to do so, having already taken a vow of celibacy. Sage Vyasa was then called in, who conjugated with the queens. Ambika closed her eyes then, her son was born blind. That was Dhritarashtra. Ambalika turned pale at the sight of Vyasa hence her son Pandu was born pale.

Satyavati, the disappointed mother-in-law of the widowed queens, then persuaded Vyasa to get the royal dynasty a normal son. The unwilling queen Ambalika sent in her guise her maid. Vyasa who sensed the impersonation disclosed it to Satyavati. He also added that the son born would be a righteous and respected person. So was Vidura born, as an incarnation of Dharma. How? There is a past to that past, which is interesting, as it is characteristic of the *Mahabharata* - stories within stories.

When saint Mandavya was in intense meditation a band of robbers, chased by royal guards, threw the stolen booty near him and went hiding. Seeing the stolen goods by the side of the saint, the guards caught hold of him. The king ordered "Mount him on a sharp trident till his death." When the sentence was being carried out, the saint stayed alive. Hearing this, the king rushed there, got the saint dismounted from the trident he apologized. The offended saint approached the deity of dispensation of justice, *Dharma* and asked him the reason for that ghastly punishment. Mandavya was told that as an urchin he had harmed a butterfly by inserting a thorn in her back and he had just paid the price for that prank. Mandavya took it too much of a punishment for a boyish mirth. As the deity of justice went beyond his brief in ordering a punishment grossly disproportionate to the crime, the saint cursed the deity to be born in planet earth and live as a man. That was the advent of Vidura. That was why while many respected him Duryodhana insulted him; he had to bear it.

*Tirukkural*, a later day secular Tamil didactic work echoes, in substance and style, portions of *Vidura Niti.* There is much in common between the two works with regard to evolution of man as a leader and that Tiruvalluvar, author of *Tirukkural*, employs much the same similes, metaphors and imagery.

> "*Vidura Niti* is universal, stressing on people's duties and responsibilities. Its style is direct and simple," [7]

says N. Sridharan, who has translated the work from Sanskrit to Tamil.

**Vidura Niti, the occasion**

Vidura met his brother Dhritarashtra, who was sleepless, as his emissary Sanjaya had withheld the feedback of his peace mission to the Pandavas, saying he would divulge it at the court next morning, which is a technical breach of protocol but a tactical tiding over of a tricky situation. Vidura tells Dhritarashtra, "Reposing the care of thy kingdom on Duryodhana, on Sakuni, on foolish Dussasana and on Karna, how const thou hope for prosperity?" [8] He means thereby that wrong devolution of powers makes the leader sad and sleepless.

Vidura did not know the agenda when called in. He told his brother the worthy way of living as a man and as a ruler. It is a loose sally of mind. Vidura would appear to be rambling and jumping from topic to topic, but he returns to the base after the meandering. Thematic unity is maintained. May be Vidura thought he would convince his brother through a methodless method; inflicting any purported, crafted sermon might make him stay obstinate, he thought perhaps.

## Vidura: leadership qualities to be cultivated

(Page numbers of quotes refer to Ganguli's – Vol. II)

**1. Know the components of wisdom**

The marks of a wise man are: Adherence to acts worthy of praise and rejection of what is blamable, faith, and reverence. He whom neither anger, nor joy, nor pride, nor false modesty, nor stupefaction, nor vanity, can draw away from the high ends of life, is considered as (sic) wise. P. 59

He who speaks boldly, can converse on various subjects, knows the science of argumentation, possesses genius, and can interpret the meaning of what is writ in books, is reckoned as wise. P. 60

**2. Be intelligent**

What anxiety has he, that has intelligence, energy, prowess, strength, alacrity and perseverance? P. 79

Long are the arms, which intelligent persons have by which they can return wrongs for wrongs done to them. P. 81

Intelligence, tranquillity of mind, self-control, purity, absence of harsh speech, and unwillingness to do anything disagreeable to friends, these seven are regarded as *fuel* of prosperity's flame. P. 83

**3. Your judgement matters**

He that understands quickly, listens patiently, pursues his object with judgement, and not from desire, and spends not his breath on the affairs of others without being asked, is said to possess the foremost mark of wisdom. P. 59

**4. Have self-control**

Great prosperity waits upon him who has subdued his senses, the body is one's car, the soul within is the driver, and the sense are his steeds. Drawn by those excellent steeds, when well-trained, he that is wise, pleasantly performs the journey of his life...so one's sense unsubdued, lead only to destruction. P. 66

**5. Cultivate humility**

He that is graced with every virtue and is endued with humility, is never indifferent to even the minutest sufferings of living creatures. P. 84

**6. Be even-minded**

He who exults not at honours and grieves not at slights and remains cool and unagitated like a lake in the course of the Ganga is reckoned as wise. P. 59

**7. Your perseverance pays**

He who strives, having commenced anything, till it is completed, who never wastes his time and who has his soul under control is regarded wise. P. 59

Perseverance is the root of prosperity, of gain. P. 90

**8. Be righteous to gain other virtues**

Righteousness is the one highest good; and forgiveness is the supreme peace; knowledge is one supreme contentment and benevolence one sole happiness. P. 61

**9. Demonstrate patience**

That illustrious person who does not grieve when a calamity has already come upon him, who exerts with all his senses collected and who patiently bears misery certainly the foremost of persons and all his foes are vanquished. P. 64

**10. Your endurance wins against odds**

Gold is tested by fire; a well-born person by his deportment: an honest man by his conduct. P. 70

**11. Have good food habits**

He that eats sparingly wins these: health, long life, and ease: his progeny also becomes healthy and nobody reproached him for gluttony. Ganguli II–P. 79

The wise praise food that is easily digested. P. 71

**12. Bear slander**

One should not return the slanderers or reproaches of others for the pain is felt by him who bears silently, consumes the slanderer. Indulge not in slanders and reproaches. P. 72

One is freed from those things from which one abstains and if one abstains from everything he has not to suffer even the least misery. P. 73

That man who never assumes a haughty mien who never censures others, praising himself the while, and never addressees harsh words to others for getting himself is ever loved by all. P. 64

The king should be content with the name he wins and the umbrella that is held over his head. P. 83

## Vidura: Leadership Qualities to be curbed

**1. Avoid anger, harsh words**

Avoid words that are harsh and fraught with anger. Harsh words burn and scorch the very vitals, bones, heart and the very sources of the life of the man. P. 72

**2. Eschew theft, womanising and infidelity to friends**

One should not at night lurk in the yard of another's premises, nor should one seek to enjoy a woman to whom the king might make love. P. 79

Great fear springs from three crimes, theft of other's property, outrage on others' wives and breach with friend. P. 62

**3. Avoid pride, folly, insolence, treason**

The intelligent man who relinquishes pride, folly, insolence, sinful acts, disloyalty towards the king, crookedness of behaviour is the foremost of the species. P. 65

**4. Examine carefully**

They that are quarrelsome, covetous, shameless, deceitful are known unrighteous and their companionship should always be avoided. He that is learned, examining everything carefully and reflecting well should, from a distance, avoid the friendship of the vile and wicked persons such as these. P. 84

**5. Shun the six faults**

The six faults to be avoided by a person who wishes to attain prosperity: sleep, drowsiness, fear, anger, indolence and procrastination. P. 63

**6. Keep away from the wile and the low**

Abstain from companionship with those that are vile and low. P. 72

**7. Don't insult**

Do not humiliate and insult others. P. 72

**8. Don't quarrel**

Quarrel not with friends. P. 72

## Vidura: Leadership - Transparent functions

**1. Realise the importance of time and place**

Effort after securing what is good, the properties of time, place and means, acquaintance with scriptures, activity straightforwardness and frequent meetings with those that are good these bring about prosperity. P. 89

**2. Share and flourish**

He should divide his wealth of the kingdom among those that serve him. Alone he should not appropriate everything. P. 83

**3. Gain by wise counsel**

Friends that are eminent in wisdom, virtue, learning and years, he that asks their advice about what he should do and should not do is never misled. P. 90

**4. Work your way to wealth**

He that is without deceitfulness, he that is active, grateful, intelligent and guileless, even if his treasury be empty, obtains friends, counsellors and servants. P. 83

**5. Recruit talents discerningly**

Men of learning say that a servant be endued with eight qualities, viz., absence of pride, ability, absence of procrastination, kindness, cleanliness and incorruptibility, birth in a family free from taint and weightiness of speech. P. 78

## Vidura: Leadership - Discreet Functions

The following are discreet functions of a ruler/CEO/leader, by Vidura's norms:

**1. Be indiscernible**

He whose intended acts and proposed counsels remain concealed from foes, and whose acts become known only after they have been done, is considered wise. P. 59

**2. Mind the foes**

He is a wise person who does not disregard even a weak foe; who proceeds with intelligence in respect of a foe, anxiously watching for an opportunity; who does not desire hostilities with persons stronger than himself and who displays his prowess in season. P. 64

**3. Beware of inherent foes**

He that desires success and a long dynasty should ever guard himself from the six. They are intoxication; sleep, inattention to spies, set over by another, one's own demeanour as dependent on the working of one's own heart, confidence reposed on a wicked counsellor and unskilled envoys. P. 86

Having wronged an intelligent person, one should never gather assurance from the fact that one lives at a distance. P. 79

A foe that deserves death and brought under subjection should never be set free. P. 83

**4. Evaluate the demands and the competence**

Before one engages in an act, one should consider competence of the agent, the nature of the act itself and its purpose, for all acts are dependent on these. P. 66

**5. Espy the spies**

That king whose counsels cannot be known by either outsiders but who knows the counsels of others through his spies enjoys prosperity for long. P. 82

**6. May not your tongue reveal the heart**

Never tell one, "I do not believe thee;" but assigning some reason send him away on a pretext. P. 79

**7. Be cautious in trusting**

One should never put trust on him who should not be trusted, not put too much trust on him who should be trusted. P. 81-82

**8. Weigh external counsel**

Never set thyself against the decision which a person has arrived, who keeps low company and who is in the habit of consulting all he meets. P. 79

One should never speak of what one intends to do. Let anything you do in respect of virtue, profit and desire be not known till it is done. Let counsels be not divulged. P. 82

* By speaking words out of season even Vrihaspathi himself incurs reproach and the charge of ignorance. P. 84

**Chapter IV**

# Section 6: Leadership as Propounded in *Bhagavad Gita*

Of nearly a lakh of stanzas of *The Mahabharata*, the *Bhagavad Gita* takes just 700 plus. Yet, there are more books on the *Gita*, than on the other sections of the epic. The *Gita* had walked out of its ecclesiastical confines and entered the social realm with books by erudite leaders like Gandhiji, Vinoba Bhave, Bala Gangadara Tilak, Shri Aurobindo, Rajaji, Swami Chinmayananda, Swami Chitbhavananda and others.

Jack Hawley, an American translator and commentator of the *Gita,* states:

> "When Mahatma Gandhi died - the 'great-souled one' the leader of India who non-violently freed his country from British rule – a now-famous photograph was taken of all his possessions: his simple white cotton piece of clothing, his glasses, his sandals, and his well-worn copy of the *Bhagavad Gita*. It was the book he read daily, as a source of endless inspiration to him." [9]

Taking the *Gita* as an integral part of *The Mahabharata* and not an alienable text, Shri Aurobindo adds,

> "It does not stand apart as a work by itself but is given as an episode in an epic history of nations and their wars and arises out of a critical moment in the soul. The teaching of the *Gita* must therefore be regarded as (having) a bearing upon a practical crisis in the application of ethics and spirituality to human life." [10]

The *Gita* has travelled from religion to ethics, to philosophy, to meta-physics, to spiritualism and to management. The credit of ushering in the *Gita* to the corporate domain, to attune the executives to the lessons of Lord Krishna, goes mainly to

(i) Jack Hawley, The Bhagavad Gita, A Walkthrough for Westerners

(ii)Ajanta Chakravarty, The Geeta and the Art of Successful Management

(ii) R.S. Garg, Gita for Success in Modern Life

(iv) V. Ramanathan, Bhagavad Gita for Executives.

"The battle of *The Mahabharata* was fought probably in the 10th century BC. On the hot dusty plains of Kurukshetra stood the warring clans of Kauravas and Pandavas, first cousins by birth and feuding warriors by circumstances." [11]

says Ajanta Chakravarty.

The crucial background of the calamitous Kurukshetra war and the exact juncture of the utterance of the *Bhagavad Gita* are captured by Jack Hawley in his engagingly precise expressions:

"His unseeing eyes blinked several times as he spoke to his minister Sanjaya. The blind old king, Dhritarashtra, fidgeted and cleared his throat. "Tell me, Sanjaya, what is happening on the holy plain where the mighty armies of my son Duryodhana and his cousin Arjuna are gathered to fight?" [12]

Of Sanjaya, bidden by Dhritarashtra to relate to him as to what was happening in the battlefield Krishna Chaitanya says,

"Vyasa, (as an august character in the poem) gives magical powers to Sanjaya that makes him the perfect war correspondent who can roam all over the field without danger... Sanjaya gives a visually vivid narration to the blind king, implacably driving home the basic responsibility of the monarch every time Kaurava fortunes suffer a serious blow... And as the narration ends, the magical power that is enabled it is exhausted....The old man knew that his son Duryodhana's decision to go to war was wrong. He knew that the young king's judgement was clouded over by his jealous hate for his cousin. The old man had felt pangs of conscience but had said nothing when his son had cheated Arjuna's family out of their rightful kingdom and then denied their request even for a trifling parcel of land that was rightfully theirs. The old man had maintained his curious silence when his son mortified Arjuna's wife and the whole family in public by having a henchman attempt to strip her of her clothes. He didn't condemn his son's heinous attempt to assassinate Arjuna's entire family. Nor did the old man try to change his son's mind when the young king sneered at all the recent peace overtures from Arjuna's family....Indeed, the old man was so caught

up in his mindless support of his son that neither ethical nor spiritual feelings could find their way into his heart. All good judgement had been lost. An unfair and ill-conceived war was about to erupt, although he was the only person who could at this point avert the disastrous slaughter, he had no mind to do so." [13]

Sanjaya tells Dhritarashtra of Duryodhana's nervousness. In Hawley's words,

"Perhaps his confidence wanes or his conscience bothers him." The old king didn't immediately react to this, as the old man's spirits were as sinister as his son's. Instead of boldly facing the enemy, Duryodhana faulted the teacher for having tutored Arjuna in archery. Sanjaya tells Dhritarashtra, "No one should ever speak to his teacher in this way; it reveals your son's nervousness." [14]

Arjuna also loses his resolve, for altogether different reasons. For a moment he thinks, was he there to kill his kith and kin. Says Arjuna,

"I know they are overcome with greed. And I know they are blind to the evil of all their treachery. But does that justify my being blind too? If those same relations attack me and kill me, unresisting and unarmed on this battlefield, so be it. Death would be better for me." [15]

Lord Krishna emboldens the hesitant Arjuna to fight and win the war; that is the Bhagavad *Gita.* Another reference on the *Gita's* greatness' bears relevance.

"Gandhi identifies Krishna with the righteousness of the end and Arjuna with the purity of the means and says that where the means are clean, God is undoubtedly present with His blessings and where the two are combined their defeat is an impossibility," [16]

says V. Ramanathan, translator and commentator.

Yet another eloquent testimony is Jack Hawley's admission as a non-Indian corporate consultant, trainer and writer, working to instill new energy, heart and spirit into large organisations. Says he,

"Over the years, I had already developed a relationship with the *Gita.* Although my cultural background (a practical organisation consultant from

California) is far distant from India, for me, the *Gita's* teachings were tangible and immediate. For twelve years my wife Lousie and I had lived about six months each year in a spiritual community in rural India where the culture of the *Gita* is still a strong part of daily life. I was therefore able to test these teachings on the touchstone of life's trials as I lived them." [17]

This part of the thesis which attempts to derive lessons on leadership has faith in the words of Hawley who says,

"To read the *Bhagavad Gita* is to swing back and forth smoothly between the head and the heart, between the worldly and spiritual, arching between gaining knowledge and applying it in today's real world. In this swing from humanness to godliness lies the *Gita's* secret penetrating power, its ability to lift and move." [18]

If that be so, what are the lessons for leadership from the *Gita*?

When the protégé's confidence sinks, Krishna, the mentor, lifts him up, praising him as a cultured person and an evolved soul against the normal human response of a frustrated mentor over an ubiquitous protégé – "Do you dither? Had I known it, I wouldn't have driven you here. GTH – (Go to hell)."

Krishna arouses Arjuna's sagging energy and eggs him on to strive for success. That is where divinity scores over humanity. May this approach inspire modern leaders in the way they handle their deputies. Let them follow this to guide their staff, boosting up their energy. Let the *Gita* talk to the modern Arjunas, hesitant leaders, in the battlefield of life, Kurukshetra.

The need for this enthusing mentor-protégé approach is advocated by diplomat and author R.S. Garg

"...the implications of certain parts of the *Bhagavad Gita* insofar as they affect the daily life of a reasonably well-placed person. He or she is educated and may even be in the decision making position as an executive in a government department or a corporate division or he may be a professional committed to implementation of certain policies for the country or the society." [19]

Correlating the *Gita* to the corporate realm Ajanta Chakravarty says,

"Management deals with people. Everyone is not brave, valiant, clever and sensitive. An individual may display varying characteristics of courage and cowardice, tolerance and intolerance, friendliness and enmity under different circumstances. However, no matter what the circumstance, the individual prowess of man enables him to justify and rationalise his actions by constructing substantive arguments in their favour. This is what Arjuna does. It is a classic example of mental bankruptcy to be seen in management through the ages, when managers, instead of leading, spend their valuable intellectual resources in constructing excuses for not doing so. This is the situation in so many business organisations though today when massive changes are unfolding, it is more necessary than ever before that management should have lightning reflexes, canny foresight and a determination of tempered steel. Where managers are busy creating smoke-screens of excuses for indecisiveness, how can an organisation achieve its objectives?" [20]

Ajanta Chakravarty adds,

"The manager is a *sarati*, the chariot driver. He does not bear weapons or fight but a great proportion of the warrior's success depends on the vision, skill and ability of the *sarati* to manoeuvre him through the battlefield and take the best advantage of various opportunities. The warrior is the executive, the *sarati* the manager. It is the manager who plans, guides, directs and takes a holistic view of the arena to decide where his executives may operate and how." [21]

Ajanta Chakravarty, writing in 1995, used the terms manager and leader when they were actually interchangeable. Now that leadership is considered separately, her terms manager and executive shall mean leader and manager.

The *Gita's* leadership lessons are approached under three divisions - Qualities, Attitudes and Modes of functioning. Like *Tirukkural, Vidura Niti* and Bhishma's *Raja Niti,* the *Gita* also calls for the qualities of heart and the head, but searches beyond them; it expects the leader to be soulfully wholesome.

"The senses are subtler than the body; the mind is subtler than the senses; the intellect is subtler than the mind. Far above all is soul, the subtlest of all, which is beyond any and all desire." Gita III- 42

Gita's Leadership: the transformation within

Leadership lessons of the *Gita* are approached here from the above perspective, accommodating the roles of heart, head and soul, under the divisions – Qualities and Functions.

"Even the great sages were perplexed as to what is action and what is inaction. I will tell you which actions you should perform and which ones to avoid." - Lord Krishna, The *Gita*, Chapter IV

In the above words the protagonist has said the essence of the *Gita* more succinctly than any of the translators or commentators. Here are extracts from the *Gita* from that perspective of what to do and what not to do, as applicable to a leader's duties. They are transformational traits and the transformation has to take place in one's inner recesses that is deeper than the heart and the head, which is otherwise termed the soul.

If the *Bhagavad Gita's* import is to be presented in a pithy paragraph, it could run like this:

To know what to do and what not to do, man should undergo a subtle transformation within; he should control his wayward senses from the cravings unworthy of himself, direct his mind and intellect toward true knowledge, take up selfless actions, give up the fruits thereof and pursue the path of refined altruism.

How to go about? Lord Krishna guides and that is the *Bhagavad Gita*.

The *Bhagavad Gita* presents a master and his disciple locked up in a discussion on the nature and functioning of man's senses, mind, heart and soul. The disciple is caught in a critical bind and wonders whether to strike at all, knowing full well that he was on the battlefield only to fight. The dithering was due to the fact that he was pitted against his cousins, other relatives, his teachers and his own grandfather. Lord

Krishna enthuses him to be pro-active. Action alone does not count. The type and the attitude of the person who acts count as much as the action.

Taken in the corporate perspective the extracts refer to leadership traits that count. The *Gita's* sermon is a leader's emboldening, enlightening address to his dilemmatic, dithering manager as to what to do in the battlefield of life and pursuits. Krishna is the leader and Arjuna is manager.

## The *Gita's* Leadership: Heart, Mind And Intellect

(Roman numerals refer to *Gita's* Chapters; Arabic ones the serial number of the verse.)

> One's behaviour is rooted in the thoughts and the tendencies that predominate in them. This is the meaning of one's nature. - III - 33

The man is the leader, nothing more, nothing less. If the man is set right, the leader in him will also have been set right. And, what makes man a man, and the man a leader, and for that matter, a good leader? *Bhagavad Gita* answers these questions in accordance with Indian philosophical tenets that a man is bound by the combination of three *gunas* - characteristics, *sattva, rajas,* and *tamas*. These three words could be rendered into English as (i) being wise and sober (ii) Being valiant and steadfast (iii) being idle and indifferent, connoting to the brainy, brawny and the lazy.

*Sattva* signifies calmness, wisdom and the associated sobriety. *Rajas* prompts one to be brave and assume warrior-like qualities. *Tamas* is inertia, lethargy, marking inward darkness. However, people cannot be pigeonholed in the three categories. No one is born with a particular *guna* or lives all through with it. The three, in different proportions, mould one. The proportion varies from person to person. A person is what his dominant *guna* is. That *guna* decides his personality.

All advisors, counsellors and their ilk under the category of intellectuals are people with *sattvic* qualities – they use their brains most. Soldiers and others who eke out their living by their physical strain and bravery are of *rajasic* type – they use their brawn. Persons who are neither *sattvic* nor *rajasic* are *tamasic*; they are influenced by *tamas*, inertia coupled with ignorance.

What makes a man good or bad, vibrant or lazy depends on the proportion of the above. Over the years one can change the ratio by volition. One can grow from one stage to another, but there are riders. A *sattvic* can turn a *rajasic* or a *rajasic* could become a *sattvic*. One can have the characteristics of both and could use one or the other as the occasion demands. This interchange is possible only within the first two categories. The third never grow out of their stupor or stupidity. The *tamasic* have neither inclination nor the capacity to change. And, they wouldn't regret their lot!

A *sattvic* person could become valourous; a *rajasic* one could take to scriptures. He takes up arms too. Bhishma, the grandsire of *The Mahabharata*, a kshatria, was *rajasic* and *sattvic*. Dronacharya was a Brahmin; but a *sattvic* turned a *rajasic*. He was the second in command in the Kurukshetra war. Parasurama, a *sattvic* Brahmin, was also *rajasic,* an adept in weaponry. Yudhishtra, a ksahatria, is *rajasic* and *sattvic,* being knowledgeable in scriptures and an able warrior too.

What do the *slokas* on *gunas* in the *Gita* tell on leadership in the modern context? The *sattvic* and the *rajasic* alone could be leaders, not the *tamasic*. Still taking cues from the *Gita* those of the first two can attempt a changeover, if needed, or they could also note whether the *tamasic* are corrigible or incorrigible, so that they can take up or give up any bid to improve them. The *tamasic* character is King Dhritarashtra. He could not become *rajasic* because he was visually challenged; but he could have become *sattvic.* Had he been so, the *Gita* would have been born in the battlefield! He did not take any step toward evolution of his personality. Born blind, he lived blind.

**1. Grow from Being To Becoming**

Arjuna, known for his valour, which was the pride of his brothers and envy of his cousins, was seen dithering in the battlefield and Krishna energised him to be both *rajasic* and *sattvic*. Krishna says the growth of a man should be from 'being' to 'becoming,' from just an ordinary human being to one divinely endowed. That is the essence of – Jnana Vijnana Yoga (Chapter VII)

One learns knowledge through his senses and mind, that is through sight and thinking; one gains wisdom through direct grasp, through insight and intuition. Knowledge 'knows' at an intellectual level; wisdom realises it fully and is able to

apply it in daily living. Once you combine both of these, there is nothing more you need to know in this world. (VII-2)

**2. Take the food that nourishes**

You are what you eat, and, you eat, based on what you are. XVII–8

Apart from his genes food habits also mould man's character. What is sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander. The menu for inmates of monasteries is different from the staff there. Normally food preferences reflect one's nature, but one is also at liberty to choose the food that nourishes him, of *sattvic* or *rajasic* components, per his state and need. Change in food habits causes a change in personality traits. Says *Gita*:

> Regarding dietary practices, know that there are subtle elements in food that significantly influence the mind, and therefore shape mental attitudes. This creates a cycle similar to the situation with one's faith: You are what you eat and you eat based on what you are. (XVII - 8)

Food is a vital factor influencing character and behaviour. Still it is not every-thing. One should change himself through his firm will; he should also have the firm resolve, not to slip off from his status and stature. The type of food one takes shapes his will power too. Normally what type of food the *sattvic*, *rajasic* and *tamasic* people take, or what sorts of food come under the above three categories? Gita has answers:

*Sattvic* people consume pure, mild, nourishing food that strengthens them physically and brings pure thoughts and mental cheer-fulness. Their foods are fresh, juicy, soothing and agreeable to the body's digestive system. Breakfast is light; the daytime meal is as required, but not more; supper is as light as possible so bodily organs can rest through the night. (XVII –8)

*Rajasic* people are drawn to spicy, hot, bitter, salty, acidic and burning food. Like the people who eat it, this food produces pain, grief and disease, and hinders spiritual attainment. (XVII -9)

*Tamasic* people eat old, overcooked, stale, tasteless, impure, empty and dead food with no nutritional value. This food returns the qualities in kind to the eater.

(XVI I–10)

People who eat too much or too little or who sleep too much or too little will not succeed in mediation. Eat only food that does not heat up the body or excite the mind. When you balance and regulate your habits of eating, sleeping, working and playing, then meditation dissolves sorrow and destroys mental pain. (VI-16, 17)

The proportion of the *gunas* could be changed by food habits. One's constant efforts toward personality improvement through dietary control will yield the results desired, says the *Gita*; the cannons of modern health science uphold this to the letter.

**3. Be self-controlled**

Controlling the senses is an important factor, says Lord Krishna. As the pursuit of senses prompt and foster desires, they should be controlled.

Senses derive their power from the many likes and dislikes imprinted in the mind by family, by culture, and by one's actions in this and previous lives. (III-34)

Much of one's spiritual discipline must therefore focus on taming wayward senses and being ever vigilant against the treacherousness of the senses. The refinement of an individual or a society is measured by the yardstick of how well greed and desires are controlled. (II. 60)

The wise recognize the transient nature of worldly gratification and thus do not look for happiness in the realm of senses. Sensual delights are the wombs of misery. Earthly pleasures, though they seem enjoyable, are fleeting and ultimately painful. Wise ones know that misery, inevitably, without fail, marches in lockstep with worldly pleasure. (V-22)

Mind controls desires in two ways: (i) not to entertain the ruining desires; (ii) to restrain them as they crop up. A leader should subdue his mind through regular practice, relentless inquiry, non-attachment and firm faith, advises Lord Krishna.

Some advanced aspirants actually learn to suspend the physical senses of hearing, sight, taste, touch and smell - offering them into the fire of sense restraint. In this way they control the stimuli at the gate before these enter their perception. Others do the opposite – not retraining the senses before they enter, but controlling the influence of

them on the mind itself. Both approaches produce the same result: purification of mind, which is absolutely necessary for Self-knowledge. (IV- 26)

The mind is restless and hard to subdue, but it can be done. There are four main ways to do it: through regular practice, relentless inquiry, non-attachment and firm faith. (VI-35)

Renounce all selfish desires, which are but products of the ego. Use your mind to curb all your senses. Rein in your restlessness and fidgety mind from wandering outside to seek stimulation and satisfaction. (VI-24)

The mind should be a rudder to the ship of senses says the *Gita*. A leader shall score over others by keeping his senses under control – *Gita* tells thus:

The roving mind that that attaches to the objects of the senses loses its discrimination is adrift, a ship without a rudder. Even a small wind blows it off its safe-charted course. Those who use all their powers to restrain their senses, steady the mind, free them-selves from both attachment and aversion – they are the people of true wisdom, Illumined Ones. (II –67,68)

Once you gain your spiritual wisdom, you will never again be deluded or confused. (IV-35)

**4. Cultivate the faculty of discrimination**

The successful man knows what is truth and what is non-truth. He differentiates the real from the unreal. This sense of discrimination is a laudable leadership quality.

The *sattvic* intellect discriminates between Truth and non-Truth, real and not-Real. It knows the difference between action and inaction. It differentiates between fear and fearlessness. (XVIII –30)

The one who uses his discrimination power knowingly for wrong ends, swerves from virtue and there is no use in his being endowed with that trait. He is not a leader.

The *rajasic* intellect also discriminates, but wrongly. It has a distorted understanding of right and wrong deeds, rationalising that the means justify the ends no matter how selfish or hurtful. This type of *buddhi* (intellect) is capable of conver-

ting truth into falsehood and vice versa. Greed, passion, anger and fear cloud its vision. It stays mired in base worldly life instead of guiding one upward. (XVIII –31)

The *tamasic* people can never be leaders, as they cannot discriminate between good and bad. But they could be converted to the *rajasic* stage, if they show initiative. Indefatigable leaders with conviction can mend them to be of some use.

The *tamasic* intellect, wrapped in ignorance and enveloped in darkness, simply cannot discriminate. Good-ness appears bad to this intellect while evil seems good. It understands life in a perverted way. The *tamas*-dominated intellect drags one ever downward. (XVIII –32)

**5. Be free from likes and dislikes**

A leader should be free from his likes and dislikes. He should endeavour to cast away prejudices. The noteworthy expression is 'Desires never say Enough.' Leaders who want to be effective and eminent should note the other points too, that, anger is linked to desires and the two are the conspiring enemies.

That awful force is desire. Desire is the force that drags you – selfish desire, which rises from your action-oriented nature. Selfish desires are insatiable, the more you feed them, the more you crave...Desires never say 'Enough.' And anger is always linked with desires, and anger corrupts everything. The desire - anger duo is your direst, most formidable enemy, here on earth. (III-37)

**6. Know the disasters of desires**

To be part of the world and discharging duties without attachment is a rare leadership quality. It may not be possible for all men. But leaders who cultivate it gain much thereby. To harbour desires and to be directed by them is getting ensnared. A leader cannot afford to be a desire-free mendicant monk. He should understand the nature and course of desires and direct them to his betterment and that of others.

The central points of issue, Arjuna, are desire and lack of inner peace. Desire for the fruits of one's actions brings worry about possible failure - the quivering mind I mentioned. When you are preoccupied with end-results you pull yourself from the

present into an imagined, usually fearful future. Then your anxiety robs your energy and, making matters worse, you lapse into inaction and laziness. (II –47)

**7. Eschew desire and anger**

Ideal leadership is discharging duties without room for desires or attach-ment. Desires prompt one to develop attachment and a sense of attachment makes one swerve from the right path. If a leader analyses the causes of his anger, he can sense the truth behind the statement – anger is the expression of a mind frustrated by unfulfilled desires.

Desires cloud your spiritual light and bury your power of discrimination. As a flame is covered by smoke, and a mirror is covered with dust, and embryo hidden in the womb, true knowledge is concealed by desire. For spiritually advanced people, desire is like smoke and is easily blown away to reveal the light of knowledge. For worldly-caught people desire is more like a dust that requires vigorous wiping so that so that light can shine. For really dull persons desire so enfolds them that they are like embryo buried in darkness. (III-38)

Desire and anger are counterparts. Anger is your response to the frustrations of unfilled desires. When you can control and transcend desire and anger you will have found true, lasting happiness. (V-23)

Desireful action is the very nature of rajas. Desire goads one into action and creates a sense of doership in the mind. (XIV - 7)

Any pleasure, even good pleasure, creates attachment and subsequent desire. (XIV – 6)

**8. Don't be greedy**

Partially satiated desires longs for more and provoke Greed. To avoid desire is to dispense with greed that ruins. Ultimately greedy leaders lose more than they gain.

Greed is but desire swollen to grotesque size. The wise one knows that desire is the eternal, insatiable archenemy, and tries to steer clear of it. But despite one's best efforts, desire still puts on many disguises and sneaks furtively into the heart and mind. (III-39)

The three main causes of this depravity are the so-called three gates to hell: desire, greed and anger. Any one of them is enough to bind you to this darkness, so abandon all three. (XVI –21)

**9. Note, purity of thought is important**

The war of Kurukshetra was born in Duryodhana's mind long before it was declared. Thought provokes words, actions and reactions. From street brawls to world wars, thought is an igniting agent. It would do well for the leaders to introspect catastrophes and calamities of human origin and fix the thought-agent. The author of the *Gita* prompts this, because an impure mind ruins himself and the society.

Purification of thought is more important than the other two refinements, words and deeds, because good words and deeds are spontaneous in the mind that is saturated with good thoughts. Maintain a calm and gentle state of mind and you will not be speaking wayward words or doing unwanted deeds. To develop equanimity of mind, allow only good thoughts and noble sentiments to arise in you. This may sound impossible to most people, but as we know now, one can indeed, cleanse the mind through constant, intense, direct practice. (XVII –16)

**10. Clear the mind of impurities**

Those of impure mind cannot give up their ego. The pure attract pure; the impure attract impure; those of anger and greed attract only their ilk. Their senses prompt them to be avaricious and money-minded. Such traits do not go with leadership.

They (those of impure mind) are bound on all sides by scheming, greed and anger because being hurtful themselves, they attract hurtful people. They amass and hoard wealth for the sole purpose of indulging in senses and the whims. Grabbing for riches governs their every thought and move. (XVI –12)

They (those of impure mind) arrogantly proclaim, 'I wanted this or that and I got it. Tomorrow, I will get more. These riches are mine, and I will spend my life, making more. I have destroyed this and that enemy, and I will get rid of the rest of them. I am, in deed, mighty. I am the ruler of my domain. I love having things of the world. I am successful, powerful, and rich. Who can compare to me? I will buy my

way, making lavish contributions to the poor and the week and revel in my own good-ness. That is how far blindness and ignorance have eaten into their soul.

(XVI –13, 14,15)

These degenerates, bewildered, trapped in their addiction to sense gratification, are stuck in the spider-web of delusion. They spiral downward into the filthy, painful hell of their own minds. (XVI –16)

Purity of action and heart is absolutely essential for further spiritual growth. (V-11)

**11. Cast away the ego**

The *Gita* delves deep into human psyche. A subdued mind is pure. It gives no room for ego; a lower mind lets the ego grow. History is replete with instances that mighty leaders had fallen more by their ego than through snares of external enmity.

From the ego principle is produced the lower mind. Its job is to receive through the senses and process the messages received from the field and carry them to the intellect. Included here are some modifications of the mind; desire and aversion, pleasure and pain, the experience of one's physical body, intelligence (the power to interpret) and the mental experience of the physical stamina. (VIII-5, 6)

The ignorant one, mistakenly identifying with the body, erroneously thinks, 'I am the doer.' This is the mark of egoism. In truth, Arjuna, all actions are really performed by worldly nature, not by Atma. The Self (Atma), remember, is beyond all action, all karma. (III –27)

**12. Cultivate equanimity**

In this world of fissiparous tendencies, it is very difficult to remain unalloyed by joys and sorrows, likes and dislikes. Still one should endeavour to cultivate qualities of purity, sans ego.

The cessation of your present pain and sorrow will depend on how well you will overcome your ignorance of your 'True Self' that still lives within you. (II -24)

And heed this important point about life in general: the way to win this great war is to react alike to both pain and pleasure, profit and loss, victory and defeat.

(II-38)

When one's actions are not based on desire for personal reward, one can more easily study the mind and direct it towards the *atma* the True Self Within. (II-41)

This is the man or the woman whose mind is unperturbed by sorrow and adversity, who doesn't thirst for pleasures, and is free of the three traits that most tarnish the mind, namely, attachment, fear and anger. Such a one is an Illumined One, a *stitapragna*. (II-56)

**13. Be of firm resolve; that is fait accompli**

The mind matters in man's ventures and leadership evolution. A firm mind achieves its aims. The phrases of the *Gita* – fixity of purpose, inner discipline and meditation are to be taken note of.

The *gunas* account for the degrees of firmness of mind. *Sattvic* firmness is an absolutely unwavering devotion to the Divine. You care-fully cultivate this <u>fixity of purpose</u> through inner discipline and meditation. You turn all life energy and all functions of the mind (feelings, thoughts and senses) Godward, and then firmly fasten them. Like the compass needle that points north regardless of the direction of travel, <u>this focus</u> on the Divine never veers from the ultimate goal of merging in That. (XVIII –33)

*Rajasic* firmness of mind is similarly resolute but holds fast to the desires for pomp, power, prosperity and prestige or even to the attachment to virtuous. If turned Godward, this resolve could lift you toward the Supreme, but directed toward worldly enjoyment it condemns you repeated lifetimes of turmoil and pain. (XVIII –34)

The firmness of *sattvic* persons helps the world progress; the firmness with *rajasic* people helps themselves at least, though for a short term. But the firmness of the mind of the *tamasic*, born of ignorance, lack of purpose and lack of fortitude, helps none, not even themselves. *Tamasic* firmness of mind is born of ignorance, lack of purpose, and lack of fortitude, which results in a deadening inertia. In the absence of discrimination or understanding, the only resolve in *tamas* is to eat, drink and sleep. The *tamasic* person ignores the rest of life as it were a dream. (XVIII –35)

Influence of the genes on one's personality has its limits. Beyond the formative period, progress depends on one's right resolves. The *sattvic* always make the right resolves and stand by them. Right or wrong, the *rajasic* also stand by their resolves, but it is not always that they take the right resolves. Still status and stature growth from *rajasic* to *sattvic* is a distinct possibility. Growth from *tamasic* to *rajasic* is almost impossibile. If the *tamasic* food is given up and the indolent habits are changed, a path for a change could open up for the *tamasic*. But it is very difficult to energise them.

*Tamas*, literally darkness, is saturated with ignorance and instills nothing but indolence and stupor. This *guna* bewilders people, stealing their capacity for work (their *rajasic* energy) as well as their composure (their *sattvic* calmness.) (XIV – 8)

**14. Be steady-minded**

Decision-making is an important duty of a leader. Wavering, indecision, unmindfully yielding to pressures and pulls spoil the leader and his ventures. The leader should be steady-minded, noting the difference between firmness and hard-headedness.

For the person of steady mind, there is always just one decision, but for the quivering mind pulled in a thousand directions, the decisions that plague it are end-less, and they exhaust one's mental strength. People with an unsteady mind inevitably end up failing; those with an unwavering mind achieve great success. (II-47)

One does not accomplish great ends in some by and by future, O, Warrior. Only in the present can you hammer out real achievement. The worried mind tends to veer from the only real goal – realising the *atma*, uniting with Divinity, the True Self Within. (II –47)

Through long concentration of one's mind ceases its wandering. After some time one develops what is in essence a new sensory faculty known as *medhanadi*, an intuitive penetrating skill that makes knotty issues of life no longer problems. (V1-15)

**15. Realise the intellect is not everything**

Intellect has its rewards. Still even a sharp intellect is no substitute to a pure mind, or a generous heart. Intellect void of a pure mind is no leadership.

From the perspectives of the *gunas* are formed two additional qualities: Intellect and firmness of mind. Intellect refers to the faculty of discrimination and firmness of mind refers to the strength of convictions, resolve, fortitude and courage on the spiritual path. (XVIII –29)

**16. Avoid degenerating qualities**

Although much is said on destiny, thinkers have been telling from time immemorial that man is responsible for what happens to him. Good and bad are not caused externally, even so, anguish and appeasement. This is expressed in the oft-quoted adage – It is mind that makes hell a heaven and heaven a hell. To have a heaven, the mind should be pure. An impure mind is hell in itself.

But those who carp about these teachings and do not practice them are deluded without spiritual discrimination. They are the cause of their sorrow and ruin. (III – 32)

God is neither responsible for nor takes note of any-one's bad or even good deeds. Both bad and good deeds are the results of action performed by people. (V-15)

From the ego principle is produced the lower mind. Its job is to receive through the senses and process the messages received from the field and carry them to the intellect. Included here are some modifications of the mind; desire and aversion, pleasure and pain, the experience of one's physical body, intelligence (the power to interpret) and the mental experience of the physical stamina. (VIII-5, 6)

On the other hand are the degenerate qualities, behaviours and moods that render a person less than human: "Pride, (ostentation, hypocrisy, pompousness (arrogance) vanity (self-conceit) anger, harshness (coarseness, sternly judging) and absence of discrimination between right and wrong, Truth and non-Truth, real and not-Real) (XVI –4)

Look more closely at degenerate behaviour – not to dwell on negatives, but to guard against them. (XVI –6)

Degenerate beings, because they have no sense of truth or right conduct, (dharma) do not know what they should or should not do. There is no purity in them.

(XVI –7)

**17. Cultivate positive qualities**

Among many leadership traits the power of positive thinking has been advocated by the *Gita,* in the following *sloka*:

Fearlessness, purity of heart and emotions, steadfastness, charity and control of senses are the divine traits. (XVI –2)

The list of god-like traits are: Truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation (away from worldly attachments) equanimity and not slandering. Compassion, not coveting (no desire) gentleness, modesty, not being fickle, (no fluctuations of mind) and vigour. Forgiveness, fortitude, courage, endurance, 'putting up with' cleanliness (clean mind and body) no hatred and no pride. All these are cardinal virtues and tendencies that reveal the real nature of human beings: their Divinity. (XVI –3)

**18. Have empathy for all**

A leader of sober traits is not egoistic; hence he has empathy for others. Perceiving everyone equal to him, he develops the right perspective in life and career. Timeserving leaders do not transcend their mundane clutches. To them power and pelf, whatever way they come, matters most. The *Gita* says:

The person of *sattvic* knowledge knows the Divinity of the Self, sees Divinity in all beings, knows the oneness of all creatures in the universe, and sees none of the separateness of others. (XVIII –20)

The man of ego sees him on a high pedestal; hence he has no empathy for others; thereby he lacks the requisite leadership trait. Such a person is always up in arms, taking others not as kindred souls, but as hostile ones, pitted against him.

The person of *rajasic* knowledge perceives separateness every-where and sees each individual as distinct from all others. He or she believes there are as many separate souls as there are bodies. (XVIII –21)

The person of *tamasic* knowledge has, in reality, no knowledge at all, only ignorance. This deluded one clings to the belief that an individual is only a body. To him or to her the loss of the body means the loss of everything. There is no subtlety of reason in this. (XVIII –22)

## Beyond Heart And Head - The Soul

Heart, head and intellect contribute to leadership. The *Gita* accords the soul the status of a guide. It accommodates the best of the heart, the head and the intellect. The soul's role is to identify humanity with Divinity; even in an agnostic context this connotes refined altruistic hedonism, ie., taking into consideration the larger interests of the humanity, void of any personal stakes. The *Gita* addresses Arjuna, so much so, everyone on this.

Addressing the hesitant but valiant Arjuna on the battlefield, just when the war had been declared, Lord Krishna told him of the ordained functions of individuals and how well could they be performed. As things get done in accordance with the character of the doer, Krishna sermonised on the *qualities* and *duties* of a leader. They were discussed in the foregone section. Here are the *Gita's* directives to the functioning leader.

1. **Know it before you do it**

A leader, before he acts, should have thought of the modes, intents and consequences of his action; he should have a thorough knowledge of his foray. When he starts doing it, he must give up the feeling that he is the doer; he should do it in all modesty, as arrogance would spoil the results. Krishna says a leader is a servant. Modern western thinking is also in conformity with ancient wisdom. Recently author Robert Greenleaf has come out with a book titled *Servant Leadership*.

The function of the scriptures is to guide people toward living a perfected life on earth and repeatedly remind them of the goal, which should be nothing short of

achieving Divinity Itself. But those who spurn the teachings and guidance of scriptures and act only on the impulses of their desires will not achieve perfection and divinity, only misery. (XVI –23)

Let the scriptures tell you what you should and what you should not. Know what the right choices are and live up to them. It is simpler than you think. When you, or anyone, is firmly on the road to enlightenment there is no conflict at all between what you do and what the scriptures advice. (XVI –24)

The ignorant cannot lead the community; the enlightened who are the best servants of the society. So do your worldly work without attachment and for the interests of all. (III-20)

Right knowing leads to right doing. Right doing gives rise to right knowing. Take either path to the very end where they meet. (V -5)

**2. Do your assigned duty**

One's personal duty in life (svadharma) should be viewed as one's duty…for a warrior, war against evil, greed, cruelty, hate and jealousy is the highest duty. (II-31)

One's duty in life is one's dharma. This essentially means that you have to live by your inner Truth rather than your selfish desires. One must do one's duty. (III-35)

**3. Do not withdraw from responsibilities**

Leadership is no position or status but a role of responsibility. And, what are the factors a leader has to take into account in discharging his duties? The *Gita* answers:

If you do not do your duty the tale of your dishonour will be repeated endlessly. For a man of honour to go down in history as dishounourable is a fate worse than death. Ordinary human beings naturally strive to preserve their lives, but the warrior has a different way. Warriors must be ever ready not merely to safeguard, but to sacrifice their lives for a cause. Knowingly surrendering your life to an ideal increases your glory. (II - 34)

Your enemies who have harboured a grudging respect for your prowess in battle will slander you and ridicule your bravery. Those who used to shudder at the thought of fighting you will crack innocent jokes about your faint heartedness. Failure

to do your duty will destroy the well-deserved reputation you built over many heroic battles. (II-36)

**4. Do your duty for duty's sake**

Extraneous considerations in discharging duties twist the mode of working or affect the results. The ideal is to work for the sake of work, not for other factors. That is what a leader should try to cultivate, to be successful in his endeavours.

Work hard in the world for work's sake only. You have every right to work but you should not crave the fruits of it. Although no one may deny you the outcomes of your efforts, you can, through determination, refuse to be attached to or affected by the results, whether favourable or unfavourable. (II-47)

**5. Never be selfish or have covert intents**

Corporate or political leaders with a personal stake in what they do plunge institutions into loss. Instances of leaders working with selfish stakes, being reported by the media, point to this rut. Resignations of the highly placed persons such as the Enron chief in the U.S. and some ministers in India and elsewhere are examples, not to speak of the current affairs.

The ideal is to be intensely active and at the same time have no selfish motives, no thoughts of personal gain or loss. Duty uncontaminated by desire leads to inner peacefulness and increased effectiveness. This is the secret art of living a life of real achievement. (II –47)

Do your work in this world with your heart fixed on the Divine instead of on outcomes. Do not worry about results. Be even-tempered in success or failure. This mental evenness is what is meant by yoga (union with God). (II-48)

Work performed with anxiety about results is far inferior to work done in a state of calmness. Equanimity - a serene mental state free from likes and dislikes, attractions and repulsions – is truly the ideal attitude in which to live your life. To be in this state of mind is to be lodged in the Divine. Pitiful are those pulled by the fruits of action. (II-49)

Engage in action, do your work but with full control of your mind and senses. And be aware that the work you do should contribute in some way, directly or indirectly, to the higher good of humanity. (III–7)

**6. Be judicious in charity**

Thinkers have been extolling charity as a virtue, which means the society had been wallowing in economic imbalance for ages. Charity covers patronage, sponsorship, gifts, presents, compliments and give-aways. Terms differ; they are only lexical variations, not the changing factors of life. Hence the import behind the genuine act of charity bears relevance even now. In the corporate sector charity is *quid-pro-quo* transaction. But that is not the ideal way of being charitable. The *Gita* says:

Consider the three types of charity - *dana* - alms giving. It is one's duty to give. When you offer charity out of a positive sense of duty with no feeling of obligation in it and no expectation of reward, and furnish it at the right time and place to a deserving person who can make no return, that giving is *sattvic*.

(XVII -20)

Handing over a gift with strings attached to it makes both the giver and the taker uncomfortable. Charity presented with the hint of desire for receiving a return is rajasic. (XVII –21)

Gifts given at the wrong time and place to unworthy persons – people of questionable character who squander their money or do not help others or gifts presented disrespectfully or accompanied by an insult – those charities are *tamasic*.

(XVII –22)

**7. Your attitude matters**

In the modern world of one-liners a catchy one is – Your attitude decides your altitude. *Tirukkural* and the *Gita* have said this exactly.

Sacrifice is the noblest form of action. Work performed in the right attitude of mind becomes sacrifice. Service is sacrifice. This level of sacrifice actually has Divinity in it, performing it becomes a subtle but powerful mental force. This makes life itself sacred. Eventually all your actions, mental and physical become an offering (a sacrifice) for the betterment of the Universe. (III- 14)

The objective of life is to reshape one's character upward in pursuit of a higher ideal – changing from indolence or inertia (*tamas*) into passionate effort (*rajas*) and then channelling that into calmness (*sattva*). (XIV – 5)

**8. Be devoted to the cause**

Lord Krishna emboldens Arjuna to think only of what he had to do in the given context. Hesitation or tarrying is born of one's ignorance. As the right knowing would lead to right doing, a leader should first get educated on the agenda and go full-stream. What was told for Arjuna holds good for all.

Shake off this fever of ignorance that has enveloped you. Break free of your ego. Stop thinking of worldly rewards. And, then with a perfectly clear mind and heart, go forth, fight this battle of life! (III –30)

**9. Take the counsel of elders**

The sagacious advice given to the rising generation all over the world is this: Listen to elders; seek their counsel; abide by it. *Gurukula* was the ancient Indian practice. Apprenticeship is the industrial world's terminology. Mentor-protégé is the modern management jargon. Whatever, the wise counsel by elders has its own weight and value through the ages. This leads to spiritual knowledge, absolutely essential for the functioning of a leader. The *Gita* puts it in its own way:

Another good attitude that aids the development of spiritual knowledge is to wholeheartedly revere someone who has genuinely achieved it. Sincerely question the teacher. As a burning candle can light many others, an illuminated soul can bring light to many a competent inquirer. (IV-34)

**10. Don't be a theoretician**

Armchair farming is done easier than actual ploughing. Even so, leaders addressing from pulpits could impress others; but beyond exhortation, their contribution to the scheme of things might be little. As an anonymous saying goes, "The hands that help are holier than the lips that pray." Lord Krishna echoes this:

There are marvellous benefits from this selfless way of life, but you cannot acquire them without firm faith. These principles must be lived, not intellectualised. Those who earnestly live them are released from karma, the consequences of their actions. (III - 31)

Stuffed until chocking with pride and conceit, drunk with their own wealth, they pay mere lip service to Divinity. They make offerings to the deities only for name and fame, outward show and self-promotion. (XVI –17)

**11. Be truthful in words and deeds**

Truth matters in every transaction. It cannot be sacrificed for anything, nor bartered. There are instances in the epic where the subject is debated by the characters. What to do if one cannot speak truth under the given circumstances? The *Gita* answers:

Always tell the truth and present it in as pleasant a way as possible. If you cannot do that, remain silent. If some-thing absolutely needs to be said, you must uphold the truth, but find a way to do it - that is gentle and obliging. (XVII –15)

**12. Speak pleasantly**

Bare words buy no barley; but pleasant words can. Harsh words hurt, pleasant words should not amount to flattery. Flattery is no less shameful than slandering.

Do not hurt others through harsh words. Words can be more painful than physical violence, and the hurt lasts longer. Words meant to excite negativity are an act of violence; shun such words. Abstinence from harmful words is very important.

(XVII -15)

Scrupulously avoid flattery, even if what you say is pleasant and contains truth. Promoting vanity does not help spiritual growth. (XVII–15)

**13. Let your intents be pure**

When you relentlessly practice these acts of purification of thought, word and deed, with firm faith and no expectation of reward, your practices are *sattvic*.

(XVII -17)

When you practice these acts of purification to gain admiration or respect, your practices are *rajasic*. Any selfish motive to receive a return, whether in this world or the next, makes the act *rajasic,* and this extinguishes its value for spiritual attainment. (XVII –18)

**14. Have the will to change**

The will has its way. Those who analyse leadership traits choose to elaborate this. The will of a pure mind matters, says the *Gita*. An unholy bartering of soul is insulting the divinity in humanity. A pure mind will never resort to such blasphemies.

There are three methods of purification: the refinement of one's thoughts, words and deeds – also called the purification, respectively, of one's instruments of mind, speech and body. When you modify these three you automatically change for the better. (XVII-14)

Purifying one's words, speech austerities, includes four keys: truth telling; not hurting; not flattering, and devotional chanting. (XVII–15)

**15. Never be deluded by illusions**

Philosophy prompts people to perceive that the world is two-fold – the world of things as it appears, and the world of things as it is in itself. Taking the one for the other is getting delusion. It is illusion, not reality. It hinders one's spiritual growth.

When your mind crosses the mire of delusion and your intellect clears itself of its confusion about the truth of who you really are -your True Self - then you will become dispassionate about the results, all your actions. (II-52)

**16. Lead by example**

As long as corporate literature confined itself with managers the jargon was MBO – Management By Objectives. When the attention is turned to leader, the jargon got rephrased – MBE - Management By Example. A leader should set an example. This is what Lord Krishna advocates:

Whatever a great man or a woman does, others also do. Eminent people must in the public interest put forth their best virtues. Then ordinary people try to rise to that level. (III-21)

## Summary of Chapter IV

# Leadership as Propounded in *The Mahabharata*

The above Chapter covering portions relating to leadership in *The Mahabharata* analyses the implications of *Vidura Niti*, Bhishma's *Raja Niti* and *Bhagavad Gita.*

*Vidura Niti* is plain ethics. It could be taken out the epic's context and read as an independent text on leadership. Noting the context would do as one starts reading it. Well edited, *Vidura Niti* could pass for a highly exhilarating self-improvement treatise, useful for any, more so for leader aspirants.

Though perceived as a spiritual or metaphysical text, *Bhagavad Gita* is analysed here from the leadership point of view. From taking good food to keep the body fit and energetic, to keep the mind above joys and sorrows, to do soul-searching whether the activities are in order by the code of conduct prescribed in the scriptures and whether they are directed to the common good and the larger interests of humanity.

Bhishma's *Raja Niti*, statecraft or political leadership is totally principle-centered governance, covering diplomacy and espionage. To be strategic is not to be unethical says General Bhishma who sermonises on the duties and responsibilities of a ruler. The man in the ruler matters, he says, having undergone trials and tribulations.

All the three major portions covered to trace lessons on leadership call for a leader to be human, endowed with an alert mind, flawless learning, wisdom, truth, modesty, non-violence, love, compassion, charity, pleasant speech and forbearance. Wealth should be pursued only by the right means. The forbidden vices include slander, covetousness, causing harm, mental and physical except by way of administering justice, womanizing, forbidden, especially having affairs with another man's wife. According to Bhishma covetousness alone ensnares one to over 40 allied vices.

In general, the ideal leader is expected to be pure in Thought, Word and Deed, totally selfless and always working for the welfare of others and social upliftment.

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# Chapter V

## Norms of Leadership in the Primary Sources

### Introduction to Chapter V

# Norms of Leadership in the Primary Sources

This Chapter on the norms of Leadership propounded in the primary sources, *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata,* has three sections,

(i) Listing the components of leadership as in the primary sources,

(ii) Analysing under ten heads the leadership norms and their subtleties

(iii) The import of the epigrams in *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata*, and three fables from the epic.

The first section lists out the norms advocated in the primary sources.

The second section culls out the distinctive features in deference to the normative nature of *Tirukkural*, and the normative and illustrative nature of *The Mahabharata.*

The former speaks of rulers on an ideal plane and the latter on the state-of-the world terms.

The third section carries an ensemble of epigrams (one-liners) from each text and probes into the metaphors comparing human beings through animal behaviour. Three fables from *The Mahabharata* are summed up as effective teaching aids to modern learners relevant to the realm of management.

A cluster of 50 catchy one-liners from each text is listed in the Appendices 1 & 2

## Chapter V

# Section 1: The Common Quotient - Set the Man Right

Authors Valluvar and Vyasa lived in distant regions of India with a divide of centuries between them. They took to different literary forms. They differed in their religious leanings too. While Vyasa was an ardent Hindu, Valluvar was not pinned to a particular faith. If not a-religious or secular, it is certain that his religious leanings did not get reflected in his literary work.

In the monarchic regime Valluvar and Vyasa wrote on kings, generals, ministers, spies and others. Since responsibilities of rulers do not change in monarchy or democracy, the major premise of these writers is the same - that *a good man makes a good leader*. Both concur with the need for inward evolution of man. That is prescribed as the key component of leadership. They agree on adoptable virtues and avoidable vices. Their views on the duties for the man and the king are identical. They hold the specified duties as supplementary and complementary, not isolated.

Hence it would be rewarding to explore the subject *leadership* from idealistic and didactic angles, keeping the man in the leader at the epicentre.

Says, Sivaya Subramuniyaswami

> "One of the striking revelations ...(in) this text (*Kural*) is how little has changed in two millennia. People basically have the same worries, face the same fears and personal challenges, struggle with the same weaknesses and foible, cherish the same aspirations for goodness and nobility. And sadly, they have the same propensity for dishonesty and corruption." [1]

In explicating these values Valluvar is terse, objective and didactic. He compresses his views in loaded words. His expressions are catchy edicts. But Vyasa's epic, with numerous characters of varying social strata locked up in an intricate plot, is presented on a large canvas. Set in pursuit of knowledge, power, wealth and pleasure, the debating characters advance arguments and counter them, providing the readers the dimensions of leadership. Vyasa presents in every episode leadership

lessons, which are relevant and applicable even now; so are the edicts of Valluvar. Over the centuries forms governance have changed, not human nature. Old postulates of leadership hold good even now. *'Mountains may wear down, rivers vanish, but the one thing that cannot change is the human nature,'* says a Chinese proverb.

The edicts of *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* dwell on fostering friendship, controlling anger, judicious dispensation of the law of chastisement, above all the inward growth in a ruler. That those who harness their head and heart succeed, others do not is vindicated through the characters of the epic. Interestingly both Valluvar and Vyasa employ strikingly similar expressions in elucidating the above norms. The couplets of *Tirukkural* are akin to *Vidura Niti* and the sermon of Bhishma in *The Mahabharata.* They express statements on life and leadership in stunningly identical terms. The phrases that matter in *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata*, touching leadership, are 210 -Valluvar (80) Vidura (68) Bhishma (33) and Lord Krishna (29). Majority of the components, specified by authors mean much the same.

**The 80 Leadership Quotients in *Tirukkural*:** *(Alphabetised)*

Ability, Assessing enemies' strength, Attending to the basic need - food, Avoiding base people, Avoiding meat, Avoiding slander, Being aware of enemies within, Charitable to enemies, Charitable hands, Charitable mind, Choosing the right place and time to act, Constantly learning, Courtesy, Differentiating good people from bad, Easy accessibility, Educating and training others, Eloquence, Empathetically listening, Employing right type of envoys, Erudition, Evaluating friends, Face-reading, Forbearance, Fore-thought, Free from anger, Free from base desires, Free from hatred, Gaining wealth by the right means, Gathering intelligence through spies, Gratitude, Guided by elders, Health consciousness, Honour, Hospitality, Impartiality, Industriousness, Judging listeners, Just in administration, Keeping the right type of ministers for wise counsel, Knowing one's own strength, Legitimate pride, Love, Maintaining army with its majesty, Mind-reading, Modesty, Never offending the great, No conceit, No extramarital affairs, No frauds, No ostentation, Nobility, Non-violence - not causing injury, mental or physical, Not being envious, Not being hasty, Not coveting, Not dreading the audience, Not giving room for faults, Not interfering,

Not resorting to meanness, Not taking liquor, Perfection, Perseverance, Pure in activities, Pure mind, Resoluteness, Respect for the rule of law, Retentive memory, Righteousness, Setting example, Speaking pointedly and with purpose, Straightforwardness, Sweet tongue, Taking good, timely food, Testing and trusting deputies, To dare destiny, To go at the root of hostility, Truthfulness, Unblemished family life, Using wealth in right channels and Virtuous conduct.

### The 68 Leadership Quotients in *Vidura Niti* *(Alphabetised)*

Learning quickly, Listening patiently, Not being haughty, Never be indifferent to the minutest suffering of creatures, Not desiring hostilities, Not disregarding weak foes, Not entertaining desires, Not humiliating and insulting, Not quarrelling with friends, Not rejoicing at honours, nor grieving at slights, Not returning slander or reproach, Not using harsh words, Not wasting time, Perseverance, Prowess, Realising the importance of time, place and means, Rejecting the blamable, Relinquishing crookedness, Relinquishing disloyalty, Relinquishing enmity, Relinquishing folly, Relinquishing insolence, Relinquishing pride, Relinquishing sins, Remaining cool and unagitated, Reverence for others, Seeking advice from elders, Self-control, Sharing wealth, Speaking boldly, Straightforwardness, Strength, Striving till completion, Taking up praiseworthy acts, Tranquility, Trusting those to be trusted, Waiting for the right opportunity to strike, With senses collected.

### The 33 Leadership Quotients in Bhishma's *Raja Niti* *(Alphabetised)*

Action-orientedness, Attention to mandates of time and place, Avoiding envy, Avoiding slander, Being far-sighted, Being brave, Cautious to avoid damages, Cleverness, Courage, Create, preserve and distribute wealth, Discriminating the righteous from the unrighteous, Exerting, Faith in ministers, Forethought, Health, Higher learning, Honesty, Humility, Intelligence, Know how to handle friends and foes, Mildness, Not having malice, Not procrastinating, Patience, Presence of mind, Respect to elders, Self-reliance, Self-restraint, Steadiness, Study of scriptures, Sweet-tongued, Tranquil mind and having wisdom.

**The 29 Leadership Quotients in the *Bhagavad Gita* *(Alphabetised)***

Avoiding anger, Avoiding arrogance, Avoiding desire, Avoiding greed, Avoiding harshness, Avoiding hypocrisy, Avoiding ostentation, Avoiding pompousness, Avoiding pride, Avoiding vanity, Behaving as the best servant of society, Being free from ego, Charitable mind, Dispassionate discharge of duties, Faith in action, Full control of mind and senses, Gentle good food habits, Hard work, Having compassion, Humility, Modesty, Not coveting, Not being fickle-minded, Not seeking personal reward, Reverence for elders, Steady-minded in pain and pleasure, victory and defeat, Study of scriptures, Taking the right choices and living up to them.

**The Jurist's thirty-four** *(Alphabetised)*

Jurist P. Kodandaramayya, who views *The Mahabharata* as the *magnum opus* of India, identifies these 34 values from the epic as Vyasa's norms of leadership: [2]

Ability to punish the offenders, Acuteness of senses, Amiability, Austerity, Awareness to do the right thing at the right time, Bodily vigour, Compassion, inability to bear the agony of others, Composure of mind, Contentment, Controlling oneself even at the time of anger, Controlling organs, both of action and of sense, Dexterity, Dispassion, Evenness of temper, without making distinction - friend or foe, Exceptional intelligence, Following one's own duty, Forgiveness despite unmindful of injury caused, Fortitude, Gentleness, Guilelessness, Heroism, Independence, not to depend on others, Liberality – giving charity readily when help is sought, Loveliness, Majesty, Modesty, Power to rule, Purity, Quickness of the mind, Quietism, Self-realisation, Strength, Study of science, Truth, giving a precise account of a thing

These traits and much more cited by others defy finite numerical package; but they could be brought under one portmanteau word – *Humaneness*, as advocated by the primary sources. One leads to several, the several to many and the many to wholesomeness. Terminologies vary; but cultural cohesion holds the fundamentals together while interpretative nuances over the circumstances of application, of course, vary in a few components. Still, ancient authors Valluvar and Vyasa have espoused undoubtedly, centuries ago, what is agreeable to modern writers on leadership.

## Chapter V

# Section 2: Valluvar and Vyasa: Subtleties in Import

The normative Valluvar is not burdened with illustrating what he wants to say. He has stopped with definitions, as a didactic could be expected of. Since he has not taken to the illustrative format of literature, he has not created characters in flesh and blood. Hence there is no room for any conflict in his work. He could afford to be strict in drawing the norms on an ideal plane. Yet, these authors espouse values of life on a common edifice.

An analysis under select heads of human interactions:

**Just rule**

Vyasa and Valluvar accord importance to just rule. Vyasa asserts,

"He is the best of kings who even after his death is applauded by the inhabitants of city and country and by his counsellors and friends." (Ganguli VII P. 46)

Valluvar touches the same subject thus:

'That king is held Godly who protects his subjects judiciously.' (Kural 388)

**Brain above the belly**

"He that is bereft of wisdom seeks much food for his stomach. Conquer thy stomach first. Thou shalt then be able to conquer the earth." (Ganguli VIII P. 30)

Valluvar expresses Vyasa's view slightly differently:

"Food for thought takes priority over food for the stomach." (Kural 412)

**Wealth**

Acquiring wealth is man's duty, more so for a ruler. The means of acquiring wealth matters; still the pursuit of wealth is a must, say the authors.

"Divested of prosperity and without resources, he can never win fame on earth or acquire sons and animals." (Ganguli VIII- P. 12)

Valluvar says the world does not belong to those who lack wealth. (Kural 247)

Although the authors praise ascetics, they are unanimous that negation of wealth is no trait of the man of the world.

"Making no provision for the morrow is practice that suits rishis.

(Ganguli VIII- P. 12)

Valluvar explains the corollary:

"The Government should be capable of creating, conserving, preserving and distributing wealth." (Kural 385)

**Thieving**

Vyasa grants exception to a contingent situation of theft. Says he:

"A person by committing theft for the sake of his preceptor in a season of distress is not stained with sin. One that takes to thieving for procuring enjoyments for himself, however, becomes stained." (Ganguli Vol. VIII XXXIV P. 71)

But Valluvar says a blunt no to thieving. He forbids it summarily. He says one should not entertain even the thought of thieving. He cautions,

'Even if thy starving mother is in the jaws of death, don't do anything that the erudite would despise.' (Kural 656)

In the Hindu social protocol mother takes precedence over the preceptor. Still Valluvar grants no exemption to thieving even to save the life of the starving mother. Thieving is totally banned. What is forbidden in *Kural* is forbidden summarily.

**Uttering lies**

Valluvar forbids lies irrespective of circumstances. Telling truth is the foremost duty. He says the virtue of telling truth be set aside only when one were to choose between not killing and not telling truth. (Kural 323)

In such a trite one could resort to lies, if those lies could save a life. *The Mahabharata* is tolerant to uttering lies if the liar had good intents and the lies, in the guise of truth, could usher in good things, which truth might not, under the given circumstances. Valluvar also accepts this stand of exigency:

"The untruth could replace truth provided it brings in unalloyed good."

(Kural 292)

says Vyasa over serene detachment, which is *Kural's* import too

'No agony from those things a man keeps away from.' (Kural 341)

**Pure and strong mind**

Purity of mind matters in inward growth and contribution. Says the *Gita*

'Purity of action and heart is absolutely essential for further spiritual growth.'

(Gita V-11)

Much the same Valluvar's dictum,

'Keep the mind free from impurity; that is everything of virtue; all else is nothing. (Kural 34)

Vyasa says

'Gold is tested by fire, a well-born person by his deportment: an honest man by his conduct.' (Vidura Niti, Ganguli II –P. 70)

Valluvar also employs the same metaphor.

'The strong-willed shine through hardships as gold out of smithy.' (Kural 267)

**Charity**

On charity also, the views of these authors are identical; they warn against indiscretion. They say that only the deserving are to be helped. Vyasa says,

'Gifts at the wrong time and place to unworthy persons - people of questionable character who squander their money or do not help others or gifts presented disrespectfully or accompanied by an insult are *tamasic* – low.'

(Gita XVII –22)

'Handing over a gift with strings attached to it makes both the giver and the taker uncomfortable. Charity presented with the hint of desire for receiving a return is *rajasic*.' (Gita XVII –21)

Valluvar too is categorical on unmerited charity.

'The help is rated not in itself but by the worth of the recipient.' (Kural 105)

'Any help to the poor is gift; the rest is *quid pro quo*.'(Kural 221)

**Pleasant speech**

Valluvar and Vyasa hold that the tongue is a weapon.

"Use then a weapon that is not made of steel, that is very mild and yet capable of piercing all hearts. (Ganguli VIII P.176)

Still they extol the virtues of pleasant speech. They agree that pleasant speech is profitable and advise harsh words be avoided.

While Valluvar says harsh words are worse than burns,

'Fire-burns heal, not the verbal attacks.' (Kural 129)

Vyasa avers that harsh words harm even those who deliver them.

'Harsh words burn and scorch the very vitals, bones, heart and the very sources of the life of the man.' (Vidura Niti Ganguli II –P. 72)

**No slander**

Slander is another topic where Vyasa and Valluvar are in agreement. Vyasa tells,

'Indulge not in slanders and reproaches.' (*Vidura Niti* Ganguli II-P. 72)

While Valluvar advises not to be slanderous, Vyasa goes further to say,

'Slander should never be spoken; if spoken, should never be heard and when slanderous converse goes on, one should close one's ears and leave the place outright. Slanderous converse is characteristic of wicked man. It is an indication of depravity. (XXXII – 285 Bhishma's *Raja Niti*)

Valluvar appears to be more rigorous than Vyasa in framing norms. There are reasons for it. From his general statements on life one can sense Valluvar knew very well the exigencies of real life and the hold of vices on mankind. He holds up the ideal standards and exhorts people to move toward them. Vyasa also projects ideals like Valluvar in the normative sections of the epic. Yet, he appears to be lenient to human foibles in the narrative part, where he presents mankind's myriad types. Valluvar does not compromise. Vyasa also does not; but his characters do. His vicious, not so virtuous characters are only juxtapositions to illustrate how great are

## Chapter V

# Section 3: Epigrams and Fables as Teaching Aids

Both the primary sources offer epigrams on leadership. Ten epigrams (one-liners) from each work are listed here; fifty from each are given in Appendix.    Page:

**One-liners from *Tirukkural***

Erudition is reflected in one's expressions. (28)

May the ear be fed before the stomach. (412)

What does a tall public image count, if the heart is guilty? (272)

Overloading even with peacock's feathers break axles. (475)

The persevering shall turn destiny aside. (620)

Ability is not planning, but execution. (640)

The unruffled trouble the troubles. (623)

Size matters little. (599)

Undo enmity at its infancy, as uprooting a briery plant. (879)

Aspiring for glory is light. Not seeking it is blight. (971)

**One-liners from *The Mahabharata***

The man of procrastination is lost.

Long are the arms, which intelligent persons have.

He who exults not at honours, grieves not at slights.

A weak-minded king can never display wisdom.

Desires never say 'Enough.'

Anxiety robs energy.

Greed is but desire swollen to grotesque size.

Right knowing leads to right doing.

What you do, others also do.

Anxiety results in far inferior work.

*The Mahabharata* has numerous fables of serious import. As Vyasa relates fables, Valluvar refers to animals and birds to interpret human conduct. Fish, tortoise crocodile, bull, bullock, cow, horse, deer, goat, jackal, rat, snake, elephant, tiger, crow, crane, swan, peacock and owl are among them. Elephant is cited for its girth and shrewdness, tiger for its valour; crocodile for locale-based strength; owl for its nocturnal nature. Valluvar is not a storyteller, but his imagery is powerful. Reference to these metaphors by leadership orators will make their presentations lively.

Story telling has had a hoary tradition in many parts of the world including India. Millions of men and women had heard them before they read them. The highest ethical, philosophical and metaphysical truths were couched in stories for the listeners to absorb, retain, recollect and transmit.

> "The monumental epic contains many stories and legends...not essentially part of its central axis, following a format to be found all over India, that of a story within a story," says Juan Miguel de Mora. [4]

The stories within stories, not pivotal to the central plot, are encapsulated messages. There are numerous stories that sum up the values of life in prescriptive and proscriptive terms. For crash course on management a string of such stories could be an impressive curricular content. That of relating stories is valid even now.

Religious leaders offering discourses, politicians firing invectives in election campaigns, management trainers conducting courses, writing books use stories as an effective medium to drive home their intent. One in the corporate den calls her a 'Corporate Storyteller.' That is Evelyn Clark. The blurb of her book, published in India (Macmillan) in 2005, describes her, 'The Corporate Storyteller, works with leaders who want to develop their most powerful stories and tell them more effectively.'

> "Great leaders, teachers, and public speakers have long recognized the power of storytelling. Two thousand years ago, Jesus told parables that were so universal in their meaning and appeal that they are still relevant today. We all know the stories of The Good Samaritan, The Prodigal Son, and The Lost Sheep." [5]

It is believed that Vyasa dictated his epic of stories within stories to be taken down by a scribe, which implies that script and writing practice were in vogue in India during *The Mahabharata* period. Internal references reveal that sage Vyasa's scribe was none but Lord Ganesha. That scribes lag behind the oral pace of dictators might be a mundane reality. But different was the epic context. The celestial scribe imposed a condition that Vyasa's pace of dictation caught the speed of his stylus. Vyasa was cleverer in his counter condition that the scribe wrote each stanza only after grasping the meaning. That was his ploy to buy time to marshal his thoughts.

Thus Lord Ganesha is taken as the world's first and the fastest stenographer! The epic has Sanjaya, who gives King Dhritarashtra a running commentary of the goings-on in the battlefield. A human CCTV to king Dhritarashtra, he is credited to be the world's first War Correspondent. The world's first distance education student also figures in the same epic; he is Eklavya, taking Dronacharya as his in-absentia teacher in archery. When he wanted to pay his fees, the master demanded his thumb and got it, dastardly fees that set at naught all his skills.

Stories attract persons of any age, messages driven home stay indelibly in the hearers' minds. Those of the elder generation can recollect the tales they had heard as primary school students and the parables related at religious discourses. Some of them can quote the crux of expressions. This is akin to the anecdotal technique adopted by modern writers on management and self-improvement books.

Annette Simmons who says, 'Just as knowledge can become wisdom, so do facts become a story,' identifies six types of stories to influence others:

(i) *Who I Am* stories (ii) *Why I Am Here* stories (iii) The *Vision* Story (iv) *Teaching* Stories. (v) *Values-in-Action* stories (vi) *I know What You Are Thinking* stories [6]

Further she cites Luigi Pirandello,

"A fact is like a sack – it won't stand up if it is empty. To make it stand up, first you have to put all the reasons and feelings that caused it in the first place." [7]

Turning the pages of recent history, Gene Landrum gives an account as to how mythologies, fables real-life heroes, heroines could emulate the aspirants:

"Joseph Campbell spent his life researching myths and their influence on the great. Nelson Mandela had similar experience with African fables. He wrote, 'These childhood fables enchanted me and fired my imagination for these African warriors.' [8]

Bhishma uses story telling effectively to explicate *Raja Niti.* Three stories on subtleties of leadership quotients are summed up here. Before going into them, a specimen story on the worth of story telling is worth going into. Both Valluvar and Vyasa have extolled the merits of charity; they have also cautioned against unmerited charity, even under convincing circumstances. Valluvar has said,

'An inconsiderate generosity saps the giver and the stock. (*Kural* 480)

A story related by Robin Sharma drives home the lesson:

"The lighthouse keeper had only a limited amount of oil to keep up his beacon lit so that the passing ships could avoid the rocky shores. One night the elderly man, who lived close by, needed to borrow some oil to light his home, so the lighthouse keeper gave him some. Another night a traveller begged for some oil to light his lamp so that he could continue his journey. The lighthouse keeper complied with his request and gave him the oil he needed. The next morning the lighthouse keeper was awakened by a mother banging on his door. She prayed for some oil so that she could illuminate her home and feed her family. Again he agreed. Soon all his oil was gone and his beacon went out. Many ships ran aground and many lives were lost because the light-house keeper forgot to focus on his priority." [9]

Robin Sharma speaks only of priority. What matters is the propriety too. The oil was kept for a purpose, not to be gifted away to many and too frequently. The lighthouse keeper was only a custodian of the oils stock, not the owner.

As stories drive home lessons, some of Vyasa's stories, through Bhishma's explication of statecraft, are worth consideration because of their relevance to the times from the perspective of leadership. Three stories are summed up here:

**A Dog is A Dog is A Dog**

A sage of self-control was living in an uninhabited forest. Kind to all animals he was living upon fruits and roots. Lions, tigers and infuriated huge elephants, leopards, rhinoceroses, bears and other blood-mongering animals who come to the sage used to pay him their respects. A dog with a human heart lived at the feet of the sage. Weak and emaciated with fast, the dog also subsisted upon fruit, roots and water, remained tranquil and inoffensive. The sage treated the dog with affection.

One day a hungry and blood-thirsty leopard came there, with its jaws wide open to seize the dog as his prey. Beholding it, the dog sought the help of the sage who had supernatural powers. He blessed the dog, "Thou shalt have no fear of death from leopards any longer. Let thy natural form disappear; be thou a leopard." The dog then became a leopard. The hungry leopard seeing before him a fellow leopard gave up its animosity. Later came there a hungry tiger. The dog-turned leopard dreaded the tiger whereupon the sage converted him as a tiger. Seeing one of its ilk, the hungry tiger left the place. At this second stage of conversion the dog-turned-leopard-turned-tiger gave up eating fruits and roots and started taking flesh and blood. One day an infuriated elephant came to the hermitage. Seeing its huge trunk and tusks, the converted tiger shivered. He sought the protection of the sage. The kind-hearted sage turned the tiger an elephant. The elephant seeing one of its species there in a huge shape, got terrified and left the place.

The converted elephant one day had to encounter a fierce lion and the sight of it sent in shivers. The sage pitied his plight and transformed him into a robust lion. The wild lion, seeing one stronger than him, went on its way to seek his prey elsewhere. With its stage-by-stage elevation the dog-turned-leopard turned-tiger-turned-elephant-turned-lion was seen with fear and awe by other animals in the forest. They no longer ventured to approach the hermitage, for the safety of their lives.

At that stage came to the forest a *Saraba*, (an Indian mythical animal of huge proportions) with the very object of slaying the sage's lion. Seeing this the sage transformed his lion into a *Saraba*. The intruder *Saraba* saw the transformed one stronger than him and fled away. Other animals also chose to leave, to save their

lives. The converted *Saraba* was feasting on any animal that came on its way. One day the strong *Saraba* turned ungrateful and plotted to kill the sage. The sage realised it and cursed the dog of quick and unmerited promotions to its original state of a dog.

A dog is a dog is a dog, regardless of the promotions. The CEO who wants to promote an employee should know the limits of jacking up and effect promotions upon merits. Any signal sent to others that the favoured promotee enjoys uninhibited clout with the chief of the institution would erode the morale of other employees and spoil the organisational culture there; ultimately, it would be detrimental to the CEO and the institution. Valluvar puts it succinctly:

"What matters is not the giver's generosity, but the recipient's gratitude."

(Kural 105)

Be it noted that he places this couplet in the chapter *Gratitude* and not in *Charity;* he holds recipient's deserts above the giver's.

**Strategic Pact: the Cutting Edge!**

Bhishma tells a fable of a timely and strategic pact between a cat and mouse under the force of circumstances to portray that a foe becomes and a friend and a friend becomes a foe. A cat living on a branch of a banyan tree in a forest once got caught in a hunter's snare. A mouse in a hole nearby saw that and came out to loiter, but not for long. A mongoose chased it; on another side an owl was ready to strike it. The mouse was in a trite. With its presence of mind, the mouse struck a pact with its sworn enemy, the cat, which, of course, involved a risk.

The mouse told the cat: "Look, you are ensnared; you cannot come out. The hunter will soon kill you. If I move out now, I will be killed. But I have a plan for our safety. I will release you by tearing the net away by my teeth. But before that, you should protect me by keeping me on your lap. To save its life the cat was willing to accept any condition and consented to the refuge.

With a promise from the cat for its immediate refuge and safe passage, the mouse entered the net and perched itself on the cat's lap in a friendly posture. The mongoose and the owl saw the strange sight of the foes abiding by and went off stupefied. Once his enemies had gone, the mouse started cutting the net to extricate

the cat, but was slow. The cat grew suspicious and asked why. The mouse said it feared the cat might prey on him if freed immediately. The cat said, grateful as he was, he would not kill the mouse. Still the mouse waited for the hunter to step in and tore the last knot at that strategic moment whereupon the cat climbed up the tree fast, without a moment to look at the mouse. The mouse ran off to its safety. By their timely pact the archenemies hoodwinked their chasers. The political message here be noted, by being alive to the contemporary situation of coalition governments.

**Food and Trust**

A tyrant king was born a jackal in his next birth. Regretting misdeeds he lived pure. Confined to a crematorium, he led an un-jackal way of life and took only fruits that dropped from tress. A tiger king who came to know of the jackal and invited him to join his ministry. The jackal joined the tiger on condition that his counsel would be one to one on and would be what was good for the king; he should not punish others on information from him and he should not act in rage any time.

The jackal detected the counsellors, who siphoned off the treasury by devious ways. They had a jealous hate for the jackal. Enraged they hatched a conspiracy. One day, they whisked away a parcel of meat kept for the tiger and placed it at the jackal's dwelling. When the tiger sat for his meals, he found meat was missing. Told it was stolen, he ordered it be recovered and the thief be killed. Other animals then told the tiger that the culprit was the jackal.

But the tiger's mother defended the jackal blaming the other ministers. The tiger revoked the death sentence. But the jackal said, the tiger had breached the pact by lending his ears to others; hence the suspicion and the sentence. Once the trust ceased to exist, it was improper to serve the king anymore, said the jackal and left, unwilling to reconsider his resignation. The breach of pact, the jackal's response and the coterie's villainy apart, the crux is the tiger's decision taken when he was hungry, and the stolen item being his food. None seems to be fair in meting out justice in what affects his/her own interests.

Lesson:1-*Test and trust your counsellors*, as Valluvar says.

Lesson:2: *Decisions taken while being hungry may not be just.*

These fables are not outdated. In his Foreword to Franz Metcalf and BJ Callagher Hately's book What Would Buddha Do at Work Kenneth Blanchard, known for his simple, intelligible ways of expression, says,

> "Does Buddha have anything to offer non-Buddhists in the workplace? My answer is wholehearted, enthusiastic "Yes." ...As Chief Spiritual Officer of The Ken Blanchard Companies, every morning, I leave a global voice mail message to inspire our people to be their best and remember our mission and values. This is then posted on our intranet and made available to all the two hundred and eighty Blanchard Associates in the U.S., Canada and Great Britain. Why do we go to this much trouble? Because I believe that deep down in all of us is a little voice that cries out "Inspire me! Help me be the best kind of person I want to be." [10]

The spiritual leader may be demanding, yet he is humble. Say the two authors, "Buddha lived "servant leadership" long before today's business writers and corporate consultants popularised the idea." [11]

## The servant leader

The servant leader theory essentially brings the society's interests to the fore and obliges the leader to be all the more modest, for his contributions rendered and intended as in the case of three American corporate giants who grew into multinationals – General Motors, Sears and At & T. Robert Greenleaf lauds the leaders of the three companies in his Servant Leadership:

> "Each of them is what it is today because each at a critical period in its history, was headed by a building genius (not the founding owner) who gave the institution the stamp of his personal values. Each of these building geniuses was an adequate leader and a manager for his day... each brought unusual conceptual powers – in defining the institution and establishing his values as its values." [12]

The three business leaders, building geniuses as Greenleaf calls them, are Alfred Sloan of General Motors, Julius Rosenwald of Sears and Theodore N. Vail of AT & T. As their key leadership quotients/values, Greenleaf points out the following:

Alfred Sloan: 'Remarkable organisational insight and the growing of managers.

Julius Rosenwald - 'Unusual humanness and trust.'

Theodore N. Vail –'Dedication to service and relentless technical innovation.'

Such studies would help teach and learn leadership. To be noted in this context is Greenleaf's mention of the combined role of leader and manager in the above CEOs. Though John Kotter and Warren Bennis have made subtle distinctions between a leader and a manager, their observations cannot be carried beyond the table of academic autopsy. What is required is synthesis, as Henry Mintzberg who sees a synthesis between these two roles/levels adumbrates candidly:

> "I reject this distinction, simply because managers have to lead and leaders have to manage. Management without leadership is sterile; leadership without management is disconnected and encourages hubris."[13]

This synthesis is extolled by the authors of the primary sources, Valluvar and Vyasa who hold that the man within a manager/leader should be integral.

Collective ethos is contributed to organisational culture through the initiative of individuals.Kenneth Blanchard does it commendably providing inspiration material to his staff everyday. Were he to be introduced to the epigrams and fables of *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* he will have an inexhaustible wealth of motivational material. It is up to the Indian scholastic world to reinterpret all tales and fables.

*Panchatantra* of Vishnu Sharma, written long after *The Mahabharata* is a string of fables meant for a crash course on management, to educate three young princes who were almost given up as dunces as they might not gain anything by any length of education. With his fine fables, covering quite a few as related in *The Mahabaharata,* Vishnu Sharma made the dull heads of princes as knowledgeable in six months.

If fables could be effective teaching aids toward leadership *Panchatantra* fits the bill exactly. Tailor-made it has just started attracting corporate circles; it deserves a full-fledged research before presented to the West in the modern management idiom; random relating of the stories would not do. The whole work must be approached as a unified manual of management, linking one fable to another, for cumulative gains.

## Summary of Chapter V

# Norms of Leadership in the Primary Sources

Though the authors of the primary sources *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* Valluvar and Vyasa lived in different parts of the country in different times, speaking different languages, they espoused the norms of leadership in surprisingly identical terms. In profiling a leader they follow strict ethical cannons. They start from the basic premise that a leader should be a good man, before he is anything else.

Both use the same metaphors. They hold that the Man is the measure, to be specific, all living beings including the vegetation. They have their concern as much for ecology as economics. They expect the leader to foster the plant kingdom and the animal kingdom too. They speak in one voice on the need for practicing the virtues of charity, hospitality, sweet speech, forbearance and call for avoiding jealousy, covetousness and womanizing.

What is prescribed for the individual is prescribed for the leader too – perhaps more stringently - learning, listening, reverence for life, respect for elders, love unto all, pleasant speech, compassion, forbearance and scores of other components of leadership. The leader is not exempted from any of the mandates for an ideal living; on the other hand the norms for leaders are more rigorous.

Approached from their format, Valluvar takes to the epigrammatic form of poetic expression; his is abject brevity; but his reach is very far. Vyasa avails himself of the luxury of a larger canvas, the epic format of stories within stories; he has made use of every episode to deal with some aspect of man-making or the leader in the making.

Whatever they wrote during monarchic days is applicable even in this space age, especially in the post-industrialisation corporate arena. The celebrity-endorsement, as of here, vindicates the efficacy of epics, myths and sermons, religious and didactic.

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# Chapter VI

## Evaluating Select Characters of *The Mahabharata*

## Introduction to Chapter VI

# Evaluating Select Characters of *The Mahabharata*

This Chapter has two sections, presenting three aspects of the topic of the thesis.

(i) Influence of mythical and legendary characters on some Western celebrities.

(ii) How some elders lack in-depth knowledge in alluding to epic characters, and

*(iii)* Evaluating select characters in the epic - *The Mahabharata*

*The Mahabharata* has more number of characters than most other epics of the world. Almost every type of the human spectrum gets represented therein.

There are bands of characters in bonds of love and respect to one another and there are also gangs to conspire out of jealousy hate and covetousness.

It would be rewarding to study each character as the poet presents him/her. Still the literary nuances or the circumstances of the plot are not analyses here..

Since 'Leadership' is the object of study, ten characters are approached here as to how they fared as leaders, key characteristics that made them as what they were.

They are: Lord Krishna, Kunti, Arjuna, Yudhishtra, Dhritarashtra, Duryodhana, Sanjaya, Karna, Bhishma and king Santanu.

These characters are evaluated by leadership norms set by the primary sources, *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata.*

## Chapter VI

# Section 1: Mythical and Epic Characters as Inspirations

Myths, epics, legends and even folklore have been sources of inspiration to people for ages. Celebrity leaders and authors like Adolph Hitler, Agatha Christie, Albert Einstein, Ayn Rand, Bill Gates, Charles Darwin, Dostoevsky, Ernest Hemingway, Karl Marx, Mao Tse-tung, Maria Montessori, Mark Twain, Napoleon and Thomas Edison on whom many books have been written were votaries of books themselves. Says Ken Blanchard,

> "Our folks get to hear the words of wisdom from great prophets and spiritual leaders like Buddha, Mohamed, Moses, Mahatma Gandhi, Yogananda, and the Dalai Lama, as well as inspirational leaders like Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, and Dag Hammarskjold. This variety does not weaken the messages – it strengthens them, because all of these leaders share one profound conviction true happiness comes only when the centre of the universe is not yourself." [1]

**Who inspired who**

Gandhi was influenced in his boyhood by a play on Harishchandra, a hero speaking truth. On the inspiration factor Robin Sharma cites the Indian seer Patanjali,

> "When you are inspired by some great purpose, some extraordinary project, all of your thoughts break their bonds. Your mind transcends limitations, your consciousness expands in every direction, and you find yourself in a new, great and wonderful world. Dorment force, faculties and talents become alive, and you discover yourself ... greater ...than you ever dreamed yourself to be. " [2]

French hero Napoleon had Sun Tsu's Art of War translated in French, to draw inspiration. Albert Einstein had read Kant and Darwin before he entered his teens. Mark Twain, at 15, read Kipling's Kim every year. Adolph Hitler carried Schopenhauer to battle; based on his Master Race thesis on Nietzche's Superman.

> "Balzac concocted a theory he called "mythomania" to describe his hero worship of Napoleon and Attila the Hun. Karl Marx had the lifelong idolatry of the Greek God Prometheus who stole fire from the gods and purportedly brought

science to mankind. Chairman Mao spent much of his youth studying the great warriors through books that came to idealise Napoleon,' [3]

notes Gene Landrum who lists 25 leaders and their favourite myths/books. (Those leaders and the books are listed in Appendix No: Books alone have not made these people celebrities, though they did exercised considerable influence on them over the components of leadership, prompting leader aspirants to go in for such books.

An elderly and erudite journalist perceives a rural urban divide in the level of consciousness with regard to drawing references to epic characters. Rural folk, who know epics and legends by oral tradition, are more knowledgeable on characters as analogies. The urban sensitivity to epic characters appears to be a mismatch to their IQ. Some Indian epic characters are invoked in innuendoes; invariably the vicious characters figure, not the virtuous ones, which means notoriety stays longer in public memory. Of course in the world of business, a few are equated to Karna for giving, as he personifies charity.

N.S. Jagannathan, eminent journalist, says the knowledge of politicians on epics, myths and legends is shallow. Some get their analogies wrong for their objects of attack. The references turn more odious than intended; the censure returns irksomely to its origin. Sometimes the slings boomerang on the sender. Just a few months ago, Yashwant Sinha, former civil servant and former minister, called Prime minister Manmohan Singh a Shikhandi. If one knows the Shikhandi episode in the *Mahabharata* he will have clues as to who stands so protected, who is pitted against the protector and the protectee in contemporary political situation.

Writing in The New Indian Express on Sept. 19, 2004, under an engaging title – Manmohan, A Shikhandi? Yashwant Sinha Needs to Take Some Lessons in Hindu Mythology, columnist N.S. Jagannathan wonders whether Sinha got all his facts right as he shot off his mouth. Of the lack of knowledge of epics even among the highly placed persons, Jagannathan observes,

"Knowledge of ancient Indian classics is progressively becoming more and more rudimentary among most Indians, especially in the urban areas. So when the BJP leader Yashwant Sinha recently hit the headlines with his comparison of Prime Minister to Shikhandi in *The Mahabharata,* many readers especially of the

younger generation were baffled. Beyond a vague impression that Sinha was rude to Manmohan Singh, they might not have cottoned on to the precise nature of the intended insult... What is the point that Sinha is making when he makes a Shikhandi out of Manmohan Singh... for describing a situation in which a person provides a kind of shield for someone else who operates from behind.... Presumably he wanted to say that Manmohan Singh was merely a "front" and the real actor was Sonia Gandhi...What he had done is to make himself one of the Kauravas pitted against the righteous Pandavas...Pursuing this line of interesting speculation, one could then wonder about which particular Kaurava the different BJP stalwarts represent. The choice is wide open: Vajpayee as the hapless Dhritarashtra seems apt enough. Advani could be Duryodhana and Sinha himself – perish the thought – Dussasshana?" [4]

The politician's rebuttable rebuke of an allusion is from *The Mahabharata*, which ironically, is a political epic. Jagannathan also points out that the shallow knowledge of political leaders on epics:

"The BJP that by the implication of its public postures claims an exclusive right to the legacy of the Hindu tradition, clearly needs better literacy among its leaders about ancient classics... Uma Bharti, for example, compared Manmohan Singh to Vidura, an altogether a shrewd (and original) characterization. It is not only fair and courteous to Manmohan Singh but also probably accurate." [5]

While elders feel the youngsters lack knowledge of native epics and classics, Jagannathan illustrates that even elders have to refresh their knowledge. Adds he:

"Clearly, the RSS sakhas have their work cut out. They have to hold classes in Indian mythology for the Johnnies-come-lately into the party such as Yashwant Sinha to stop them from shooting off their mouths in self-incriminating ways." [6]

Wrongly conceived allusions to epic characters would give wrong signals. *The Mahabharata* being a political epic, political leaders are expected to know the implications better. Name-dropping alone would not do. A thorough knowledge of the epics is to relate the characters with qualities attributed to them, not just noting the functions. The following section evaluates ten characters from *The Mahabharata* as leaders, what made them fail or succeed as individuals and the leaders.

# Chapter VI

## Section 2: Failure of the Man, Failure of the Leader

The *Mahabharata* is a great panorama with various types of characters.

"A very useful commentary on the major characters of this epic can be read in Irawati Karwe's Yuganta (1969)" [7]

points out Sampat K. Singh who commends native texts as a sources for studying leadership. Here is a rating of ten characters as leaders: Lord Krishna, Kunti, Arjuna, Yudhishtra, Dhritarashtra, Duryodhana, Sanjaya, Karna, Bhishma and Santanu.

**Lord Krishna**

Krishna could defy any definition of a man or God. He is both. For him no task was too big or too small. He did not hesitate to be an emissary of the Pandavas, though he was the Lord of the Universe. Though a great warrior himself he offered to be Arjuna's charioteer. A strategist, sober statesman and very often a shrewd manipulator, he calls shots in the epic. His philosophy of life spans both war and peace. If a man wants peace, he needs the strength and the ability to fight a war and win it. He delivers the *Gita*, giving the epic its metaphysical strength. That role of a universal master apart, he is a catalyst. He knows, being divine, what is in store for all players in the epic; but he is not uncanny in his timing. He believes that the means should also be fair. But he uses deception and tactics. To those who face the problem to choose between the greatest evil and the lesser evil, he commends the latter.

**Kunti**

Kunti is the mother of the first three Pandavas, Yudhishtra, Bhima and Arjuna. She proves to be a good mother in inculcating Dharma to her wards who include her co-wife's sons Nakula and Sahadeva. Pradip Bhattacharya finds Kunti epitomising leadership and the use of feminine power:

> "Kunti is the epic's finest example of inner power by a mother to act unconventionally and wholly autonomously. It is only she who agrees to shoulder the awesome burden of bringing up five teenagers in a hostile court, without any

resources but only the tacit support of Vidura ...Kunti has that rare capacity to surprise which characterises the great leaders who know how to use power. When everything she worked for has been achieved – her beloved sons are rulers of Hastinapura and her daughter-in-law has been avenged – she astonished them all by resolving to retire to the forest with, of all persons, Dhritarashtra and Gandhari...the old couple responsible for her sufferings. Her maturity is reflected in her ability to observe life closely and use learning from experiences for arriving at swift decisions to benefit simultaneously both society and her children." [8]

Kunti follows the *Gita's* advice; she achieved her ends; her sons won back the rule that was theirs. He daughter-in-law was avenged. She could as well have stayed in the palace as mother royal. To Bhima who dissuaded her, she said she had no desire to enjoy a kingdom won by her sons. Her sense of detachment, forbearance and sacrifice are adorable qualities of leadership.

**Arjuna**

Raising the question 'Who is the hero of *The Mahabharata*?' Daniel H.H. Ingalls, Wales Professor of Sanskrit, Emeritus, Harvard University, who guided Ruth Cecily Katz, doing her doctorate at the Harvard on Arjuna (The word *Arjuna* means pure) as an epic character, says in his Foreword to her book Arjuna in The Mahabharata:

"Of the Pandava brothers, the reaction to events that we find in Yudhishtra is primarily that of piety and religion. Of Bhima, it is the brute strength. Arjuna is the youngest of the three full brothers – there are also two half-brothers, to make the five Pandavas in full. Arjuna contains traits of his older brothers, but with them is still very much himself. He kills more enemies than Bhima but he has feelings of compassion and remorse which Bhima lacks. He does not preach morality, as does Yudhishtra; and yet when God speaks to man .... it is to Arjuan that He speaks, not to his pious older brother." [9]

The second part of the observation of the learned professor is not acceptable. Arjuna having been chosen by Krishna for the revelation of the *Gita* was upon a contextual contingency, as Krishna happened to be Arjuna's charioteer. However

Ingalls is right in identifying Arjuna as the hero. Ruth Katz hails Arjuna as a peerless hero for his positive and effective action. That is there. And what facilitated him was his capacity to focus. Arjuna remained focused right from his student days. To be focused is a key characteristic of leadership.

Says Ruth Katz:

> "Arjuna's predominant skill is in archery and is based on his absolute power of concentration upon his target, to the exclusion of all surroundings, as demonstrated during the final examination administered by Drona to his pupils at the conclusion of their studies." [10]

Dronacharya made a parrot of clay; placed it on the branch of a tree. The test was to hit the bird's eye. He called the princes one by one. Before the individual could shot, he questioned: "What do you see on the tree?" "The parrot, the leaves and branches" was the reply. When Arjuna's turn came, he said, "Gurudev, I can only see the eye of the parrot." He released the arrow and pierced the bird's eye. That was his acumen of focus, concentration and precision.

**Yudhishtra**

Yudhishtra could be faulted for dicing away his possessions, siblings, his country and even his wife, who was not solely his, her having married the other four brothers as well; but his regard for elders was unquestionable. He was charitable even to his enemies. A remarkable leadership trait was his impartiality. Yudhishtra was sad to find all his four brothers having met a watery grave once. Granted a boon to save one of them, without a moment's hesitation, he opted for Nakula his half-brother, born to his step-mother, saying both Kunti and Madri were his mothers and it was fair that each had one son alive. His impartiality is commendable; impartiality is one of the major traits of a leader in the attitude behind discharging one's duties.

Next to impartiality was his integrity and his consciousness about it. Referring to this, critic Krishna Chaitanya says,

> "If Yudhishtra definitely has integrity, he is not totally free from the desire to be recognised as a man of integrity." [11]

Seeking image recognition is not a negative factor, as the literary critic appears to censure. Yudhishtra cannot be faulted for his image-seeking bids, if any. If one seeks image recognition, it is incumbent on him to live up to that image. What is wrong is to create a hollow image. Yudhishtra had a large heart to forgive even the offenders. During their exile in the forests, when the Pandavas went on hunting, Jayadratha, abducted Draupadi. When Pandavas chased, he let her dismount from the chariot. Bhima was out to catch and kill him. But Yudhishtra bade his brothers to let him off. Yudhishtra is fair in his self-assessment and gauging the failure of leadership at the other end. He observes of what he considered the no-win post-war situation:

> "We have not gained our object, nor have they gained theirs. They could not enjoy this earth, nor could they enjoy women and music. They did not listen to counsels of ministers and friends and learned men ... Burning with the hate they bore us, they could not obtain happiness and peace." (Ganguli VIII P. 10)

Once crowned Yudhishtra proved his leadership by choosing right men for the key slots. Commentator Bharathiramajuachar characterises Yudhishtra thus:

"He sytematised and restructured the administration. Bhima was appointed Yuvaraja. Vidura became his advisor. Sanjaya was asked to manage the finances of the state. Nakula was given the responsibility of the army and personal (sic) administration. Protecting the land from the wicked forces fell on the shoulders of Arjuna. Spiritual aspect of administration was entrusted to Daumya. Sahadeva was appointed his personal secretary. Thus he gave responsibilities to able men ánd the king won the praise of the nobles and every subject of his land." [12]

**Dhritarashtra**

The blind Dhritarashtra held only the title, king but lacked everything else. To use the words of Jack Hawley,

"He knew that his son Duryodhana's decision to go to war was wrong. ...The old man had felt pangs of conscience but had said nothing when his son had cheated Arjuna's family out of their rightful kingdom and then denied their request even for a trifling parcel of land that was rightfully theirs. The old man had maintained his

curious silence when his son mortified Arjuna's wife and the whole family in public by having a henchman attempt to strip her of her clothes... Indeed, the old man was so caught up in his mindless support of his son that neither ethical nor spiritual feelings could find their way into his heart. All good judgement had been lost." [13]

Not having a strong mind, which is a requisite leadership trait, he was forced into physical inaction, a trait tabooed by Vyasa. He was weak and vacillating.

**Sanjaya**

Sanjaya was an emissary and interpreter to king Dhritarashtra. He discharged his duties well on both the assigments and he does not fail to point out his faults or that of his son. As the Kurukshetra war begins, Sanjaya told Dhritarashtra that Duryodhana was nervous and hence he insulted his master Dronacharya, which ill-behoved any disciple. As a courtier, minister and an emissary he acquits himself exceedingly well.

A purely technical view or a superficial observation might present him exceeding his brief. An occasion is his withholding information on the peace mission he was on. As any emissary is expected to do, he should have disclosed what transpired. On the other hand, he has the temerity to tell the king that he will break at the court the next morning. This breach of protocol was born out of the fear that if Dhritarashtra came to know what was in store, he might adopt devious methods overnight in consultation with his son. His intent was not to hold over information to make the king sleepless. He thought a premature revealing of the information that night might immediately be passed on Duryodhana who would hatch a vile conspiracy again that might scuttle waging a just unvoidable war, which the Pandavas could win.

**Duryodhana**

'A past master in subtle underhand political intelligence,' [14] Duryodhana was not less of a warrior, as Amalesh Bhattacharya calls him. He was a good and helpful friend to Karna. But the traits that would have made him a leader were lost in two bad qualities: jealousy and covetousness. Bhishma in his *Raja Niti* speaks at length on the corroding impact of covetousness; it leads to 40 other linked vices. Valluvar clamps a ban on jealousy. Thus, Duryodhana was a leader, by position, not by disposition.

When one hatches conspiracies, veiled and vile, he ceases to be a leader. What Yudhishtra tells Arjuna of Duryodhana is the right assessment:

> "Duryodhana's heart was always set upon guile. Always cherishing malice, he was addicted to deception. Although we never offended him, yet he always behaved falsely towards us." (Ganguli VIII P.10)

**Karna**

Karna is commendable for his valour, steadfastness, commitment charity and fidelity. Any reference to these traits calls for mention of his name. But he fails when rated by leadership's norms. An instance cited to reveal his heroic patience was his bearing the boring of his thigh by a bloodthirsty insect when his master Parasurama was sleeping on his lap. The occasion was Karna's stint to learn weaponry under sly. Though a Kshatriya by birth he had told Parasurama that he was a Brahmin. 'Don't tell lies except to save a life'- is the norm prescribed by Vyasa and Valluvar. Karna told Parasurama a lie, which was impersonation rather. He told it not to save any, but to kill others by practicing on a unique weapon. By the standards set by Valluvar Karna has erred by having told a lie and acting as though the end justifies the means. By Vyasa's standards also Karna failed to make grade. By nature he was good. But all his good qualities were brought to naught when he took to impersonation because of the wicked company of the Kauravas. The company matters.

Another inherent quality was his pride, which a leader should avoid under any circumstances. Vyasa's code on the disciple - master relationship approves of even thieving to save the life of a master; nowhere is it is said that a disciple could tell lies.

**Bhishma**

Bhishma, the grandsire, who gave a long exposition on leadership, was a leader head and shoulders above others. He wielded clout, without holding any position of authority. He was a well-read, resolute, valourous and untempted leader of integrity, willing to do any sacrifice for others. He was brainy, brawny and modest. His concern was to the duties ordained, not to persons. A dispassionate professional was he.

As Krishna Chaitanya puts pertinently,

"Bhishma's responsibility for administering the realm continued for two more generations, that of Dhritarashtra and Pandu, and lastly of Duryodhana. And often he had to endure the mortification of being reminded that he had no authority to decide though he had obligation to serve. And what made him continue in this curious and unhappy predicament was no compulsion by others but the demand of his own integrity." [15]

At the decisive Kurukshetra war Bhishma vowed not to kill the Pandavas, for he loved them for their virtues. Beyond that, when Yudhishtra approached him in the course of the war and asks him how to win him. Bhishma revealed that he would not bear arms against women, or those were once women and even those who bear a woman's name. Then Shikhandi, woman turned man, became Arjuna's façade. Of Bhishma's integrity question could a crucial be raised. So sagacious, why did he live with Dhritarashtra and his sons, knowing them to be incarnations of evil, and why did he not live with the Pandavas, if he ever intended to support the right?

That again was his commitment to leadership. He was not happy to be with Dhritarashtra and his sons. He had to bear agony and insult; still he stayed with them, because, when he gave word to his royal parents that he would not opt to be a king, he did not say that he would shirk his responsibilities as an elder member of the family. Further he knew for sure that his very presence as the patriarch of the Kuru dynasty had a sober effect on Dhritarashtra and his sons, who otherwise would have turned heinous much earlier. He, in deed, led a damage-containment mission successfully.

**King Santanu**

King Santanu, great grandfather of the warring cousins, might have been a good king, but he failed in his roles as a man and father. If he had been good man and a good father, he would not have been enamoured of fisherwoman Satyavati and married her, yielding to her conditions. That desire to feed his carnal cravings robbed his son Bhishma of his youth and his crown. But for that Vichitraveerya and Chitrangata would not have been born. Dhritarashtra and Pandu would not also have been born. The sagacious and valorous Bhishma would have been the king of the Kuru dynasty. A king's slip in his personal life led to a great war generations later.

## Summary of Chapter VI

# Evaluating Select Characters of the *Mahabharata*

This Chapter points out how myths, legends and books influence great men like Balzac, Karl Marx and Mahatma Gandhi. Although *The Mahabharata* is a political epic, even some senior politicians do not bother to correct in their allusions to epic characters while critiquing fellow politicians, regrets an elderly journalist who cautions against indiscreet allusions to epic characters. He criticises former Union minister Yashwant Sinha equating incumbent Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Shikhnadi of *The Mahabharata.* He comments in lighter vein that courses in epics should be conducted implying that teaching the epic to the rising generation is a must.

This chapter evaluates ten characters of *The Mahabharata* as to what they exemplified, the Dos and the Don'ts of Leadership:

Lord Krishna: *Be sincere in peace moves; still stay well-armed.*

Kunti: *Resolve to retire when things go well.*

Arjuna: *Be focused.*

Yudhishtra: *Be impartial.*

Duryodhana: *Don't covet,*

Dhritarashtra: *Don't lull the pangs of conscience when it should assert its way.*

Sanjaya: *Sometimes-even breach of protocol is just, in larger interests.*

Karna: *Never set your heart on guile.*

Bhishma: *Be wise and resolute.*

King Santanu: Set duties and responsibilities to the progeny above carnal desires.

King Santanu's selfishness interprets The *Mahabharata* as a study of leadership from failure to success; the failure of the man in a leader is the failure of his leadership. The personal failure spoils him, his progeny and his society for generations. Setting right the wrong takes a longer time and warrants desperate remedies.

Hence the man in the leader is of paramount importance.

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# Chapter VII

## Native Moorings of Modern Indian Leaders

**Introduction to Chapter VII**

# Native Moorings of Modern Indian Leaders

This Chapter on the applied aspects of leadership norms has three sections.

The opening section one explains that Leadership is an inward journey. Gandhi proved that *Truth* has its *Force* and that is *satyagraha.* Rajaji proved that an ideal leader does not consider leadership a title or a role, big or small but responsibility that is important. Mao Tse-tung, Nelson Mandela and others illustrated indefatigability.

Contemporary Indian business leaders, like Azim Premji or Narayana Murthy do not hold corporate captaincy to wiled power or to heap wealth. They are introduced here as social entrepreneurs.

The second section analyses under several heads, normally chosen by modern corporate writers, the message of Tirukkural, one of the primary sources. They are: Home and family life, Vegetarian food, Learning, Truth, Communicating, Attitude, Enthusiasm, Pure Mind, Mentoring, Delegation and allied aspects.

The third section which follows the format of the earlier one covers the lessons of leadership, as could be gleaned from *The Mahabharata* presents two Indian corporate leaders who lived by the values espoused in the epic, selflessness, mentoring and commitment without a desire for personal gains.

## Chapter VII

# Section 1: Native Moorings of Modern Indian Leaders

While lessons on leadership could be learnt from conceptual, observational and empirical sources, literary works present numerous types of characters worthy of emulation. Of all ancient works, the *Mahabharata* presents every type of conceivable character. Although modern leaders cannot be compared to epic heroes, as the parameters do not agree because of the supernatural elements in the epics, there is still much in characterization and the good could always be imbibed, provided leaders and leader aspirants realize that life is a process of evolution, from being to becoming, an inward journey.

Both the primary texts insist on one becoming a good man, to grow into a good leader and a good leader's nursery is his family. The individual, the texts say in unanimity, shall start learning from the family background such things as good food habits, pure mind and a good character. He must grow within before he turns out to be of any use to those around. The family matters in the evolution of man, providing the atmosphere to develop a pure mind. If a mind is trained well during the formative period, it stays so all through. Failure in the man in a leader would cause breakdown in his leadership too.

Some modern corporate writers also feel that one should make an inward journey to develop his leadership assets. This is what Indian mystics have said centuries ago. To say this is not to fall into any reverse snobbery rut, but to impress upon the need to reinterpret passages in some ancient works which critics and literary historians have pigeonholed into devotional hymns, mystical literature and the like, while the authors and poets had no such compartmentalisation in mind when they wrote them. All that they had in mind was man, God and the world.

Modern management writers recommend a search within oneself to become a good leader. Here is a story cited by Robin Sharma that points out pithily and poignantly the need for an inward journey:

"According to Indian mythology, all people on earth were once gods. However, they began to abuse their power so the supreme God Brahma decided he would take this gift away from them and hide godhead in a place where they would never find it. One adviser suggested it be buried deep within the ground, but Brahma did not like the idea. 'Mankind will one day dig deep enough to find it,' he said. Another adviser suggested that that it be hidden in the deepest of the ocean. 'No', said Brahma, 'One day mankind will dive deep enough to discover it.' Yet another advisor suggested that godhead be placed on the highest peak of the highest mountain, but Brahma replied, 'No, mankind will eventually find a way to climb to the top and take it. After silently thinking about it, the supreme God finally found the ideal resting place for the greatest of all gifts. Here is the answer. 'Let us hide it within man himself. He will never think to look there.' [1]

Looked at from this angle, all the old-world virtues are found to be relevant and rewarding. Analysing the qualities of soul-searching leaders, author Gene N. Landrum remarks,

"Great leaders with noble goals - those with ethical agendas - are capable of changing the world for the better. They become transformational leaders in dynamic societies and these leaders are very important." [2]

Mahatma Gandhi is a transformational leader who compels comparison with Bhishma in his steadfastness, commitment to truth, service, sacrifice and wielding influence without holding authority. As noted in the introduction, Pitirim A Sorokin who had a concern for leadership dedicated his book *Reconstruction of Humanity* to 'the deathless Mohandas K. Gandhi.' Sam Pitroda and others have also taken him as an ideal leader.

James MacGregor Burns in his book Leaders Who Changed the World has written at length on Mahatma Gandhi. He notes,

"Gandhi's invention of the concept of the satyagraha was the distinctive act of his creative leadership, and it was to be the distinctive weapon of his protest leadership." [3]

U.S. based corporate executive and consultant Keshavan Nair observes on Gandhi's leadership in his book A Higher Standard of Leadership: Lessons from the life of Gandhi.

> "In the history of public leadership, there has never been an individual as committed to a single standard of conduct in private and public life as Gandhi...he rejected compartmentalisation...Gandhiji formulated two absolute values: truth and non-violence. They were linked together, both in ends in themselves and means to an end." [4]

An advice on leadership to kings in Indian texts of statecraft is his judiciousness in choosing ministers, as discussed in the earlier chapters of this thesis. In modern India, there was a crucial situation when the enslaved India went to polls in 1937. Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, (Rajaji) lawyer and freedom fighter, won the Madras Presidency's legislative assembly elections. He was a scholar and a no-nonsense man. Choosing his ministers was an arduous task.. He was obliged to satisfy his party's interests to take various sections of the society along with him. Of that citing historian A.R. Copley his biographer R.K. Murthi calls it,

> "... a masterly compromise between the necessary claims of communal interests and dictates of his professional and moral competence." [5]

Another remarkable trait of Rajaji was his equanimity in holding public offices. From his first political office as the Chairman of the Municipality of Salem to that of Governor-General of India, he was the same man. After being Governor-General he accepted chief ministership of the Madras State. To him no position was too small or too big, as he believed servant leadership. Demitting office as Governor of West Bengal, he handed over to the Government presents given to him while in office, saying they belonged to the office he held and not to him as an individual. That was his sense of detachment.

Both Valluvar and Vyasa have extolled in as many words the greatness of compassion and reverence for life. Living in the African forests Albert Schweitzer practiced those virtues. His immortal words, as captured by James Bentley, linger:

"In everything you recognize yourself. The tiny beetle that lies dead in your path – it was a living creature, struggling for existence like yourself. Rejoicing in the sun like you, knowing fear and pain like you. And now it is no more than decaying matter- which is what you will be sooner or later too." [6]

Buddhist leader the Dalai Lama, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi holds service, sacrifice, desirelessness, compassion and simplicity as cardinal virtues. He has said, as cited by his biographer Gibb Christopher,

"One of the most important things is compassion. You cannot buy it in one of New York's big shops. You cannot produce it by machine. But by inner development, yes." [7]

The traits as an individual gained Nelson Mandela the status of an inter-national leader. His first wife Evelyn has told of him,

"Nelson was a highly organized person and very regular in his habits. He was up the crack of dawn, jogged a few miles, and had a light breakfast and was off for the day,... [8]

Strini Moodley, a fellow prisoner has said of Mandela,

"He stood head and shoulders above the others. Everyone looked up to him. When he spoke, we listened. He was patient, tolerant and I never saw him lose his temper." [9]

The vision-impaired Helen Keller could think by her soul, which was not possible for king Dhritarashtra of *The Mahabharata*. Biographer Fiona Macdonald quotes her,

"If I write what my soul thinks, then it will be visible, and the words will be its body." [10]

Many recent leaders have exemplified self-esteem, confidence, drive, vision, tenacity and perseverance, as emphasised by Valluvar and Vyasa. Gene Landrum lists 10 of them as 'the most influential people who ever lived.' Mao Tse-tung who moved China to his will fits the bill. Of Mao Landrum says,

"Mao Tse-tung went into the hills of China in 1923, at age thirty and spent the next twenty-two years fighting for survival and assembling the team that would bring Communism into power as the People's Republic of China in 1949. During this time he led his army on a retreat that became famous as the Long March, which took Mao and the Red Army 6000 miles across the hinterlands of his nation." [11]

In the Indian scenario, salutary political and social leaders apart, corporate leaders also call for attention for their exemplary behaviour. Held as the first citizen of Indian corporate den was J. N.Tata. Sampat P. Singh commends him,

"Jamsetji Tata is generally portrayed as a pioneer amongst builders of modern India because of his strong beliefs in nationalism and humanism. What is however more significant is the personality which displayed versatality, perspective, passion and vision....At college he developed the love for reading literature, which was to last him throughout life. He had varied interests including industry and he pursued them with vigour and enthusiasm. He was a great leader." [12]

J. N. Tata succeeded as a leader in that he created leaders behind him and his nephew and successor JRD Tata turned a legend in his lifetime. He pioneered Indian aviation and many new industrial enterprises.His guiding principles in his own words:

"Nothing worthwhile is ever achieved without deep thought and hard work. One must fore`1ver strive for excellence, or even perfection, in any task, however small and never be satisfied with the second best. Good human relations are essential to the success of any enterprise." **13**

Indian industrial protocol places the Birlas next to the Tatas. Of the leadership of G.D. Birla, the founder of many units, biographer Medha M. Kudaisya, observes,

" Birla's... great success was his grooming of the next generation for his family business. Not only were his sons and nephews inducted and groomed to head companies that made up the large empire but even the next generations of grandsons and grandnephews were trained during his lifetime..." [14]

The Tata-Birla legacy of leadership, social concern, austerity, hard work and generosity has become the general ethos of Indian industry, with others also imbibing them. Disarmingly simple is Azim Premji of Wipro who asserts that business houses could also function beyond the lure of bottom line. Receiving the Tata Corporate Award for Leadership, Azim Premji spelt out his leadership concept, revolving round six quotients: Vision, Values, Energy, Confidence, Innovation and Team-building. [15]

*Vision:* Vision is like a lighthouse, showing the way and pointing out hazards. It must be slightly beyond reach but must not be an impossible dream.

*Values:* If vision gives direction, values set boundaries. Values need leaders to be absolutely transparent in whatever they do.

*Energy:* The leader must work both hard and smart, long and intensely. It is the only way to keep on top of the demands.

*Confidence:* Self-confident leaders assume responsibility for their mistakes and share credit with their team members.

*Innovation:* Ideas have limited shelf-life. The leader must create a culture of c ontinuous innovation.

*Team Building:* The leader must attract the best minds and create a sense of ownership in them.... through emotional engagement."

Industrialist N.R. Narayana Murthy, promoter and Founder of an Indian IT titan, Infosys, who has designated himself just 'Chief Mentor' in the corporate world of high-sounding titles, says,

"Premji is very focused and for ever willing to learn from others." [16]

Narayana Murthy, who commends Premji, is also a great leader. He has exemplified what Premji calls 'transparency.' Of the transparency of Narayana Murthy, chronicler Devangshu Datta says,

"Infosys declares results according to eight different accounting standards, ensuring that customers, partners, and investors everywhere know exactly what is going on in the business." [17]

Consultant Srinivas Pandit provides the points of strength in the leadership of 22 corporate chiefs [18] in their own words. Ten of them are quoted here:

1. Humayun Dhanrajgir *(formerly of Kodak India Ltd & Glaxo):*

"You have to pulsate enthusiasm in the team to get results."

2. Bhavarlal Jain, *Jain Group*:

"Leave this world better than you found it."

3. Deepak Kanegoankar, *DK Group*

"I am an indefatigable optimist, difficult to demoralise."

4. Bhausaheb Kelkar, *S.H. Kelkar & Co*

"We have to create the best and reach them in record time."

5. Ravi Khanna, *Control Group*

"Lack of resources make you resourceful."

6. Raghunath Mashelkar, *CSIR*

"Only usable knowledge will create wealth."

7. Kiran Mazumdar, *Bicon Group*

"I sold my colleagues the vision of Bicon and my own personality. "

8. Prakash Ratnaparkhi, *Electronica Group*

"I believe help rushes in where strong desire exists."

9. Ronnie Screwvala, *Unilazer Media group*

"You must love what you are doing."

10. Sartaj Singh, *FMC*

"The more I network, the more I learn."

Corporate writer Raghu Palat has interviewed seven contemporary Indian business leaders on leadership. Deepak Parekh of HDFC who also figures in the book cited earlier, calls for Integrity, Transparency, and Accessibillity. [19] Meleveetil

Damodaran, Chairman, UTI, acknowledges, "I got my values from my parents." [20] "So long as you are sincere, so long as you have a sense of ethics, whatever you do will be successful and right," [21] says Naushad Padamsee, Chairman of Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development. Udayan Kotak, Managing Director of Kotak Mahindra Bank happily admits, "I do not need to de-stress. In enjoy my work sio much that it is not stress." [22] Kiran Mazumdar Shaw of Bicon of Bangalore, as says her father was her role model because of his unconventionality. "Mr. Vagul of ICICI is another of my role models. He is an unconventional person," says she striking at another leadership component- the unconventional that makes one tread new paths and innovate - in the words of corporate chronicler S. N. Chary.[23]

These obligations-conscious CEOs, catering to customers and thereby the society, have expressed what they work for. They relate themselves to the following 20 leadership quotients. They could be called quotients drawn from the empirical source. They are: Alacrity, Application, Braving challenges, Common good, Enjoying work, Enthusiasm, Exertion, Improvement, Innovation, Knowledge, More output, Motivation, Networking, Optimism, Profit, Strong desires, Team spirit, Togetherness, Vision, and Working. They are in agreement with those in the primary sources.

The above Indian CEOs apart, there are 50 U.S. based CEOs listed in the appendix. They also share the above 20 leadership components. They have been subjects of interesting articles, monographs, biographies and part of business history.

Yet hundreds of them, those succeeded fully and partially, failed slightly or miserably, remain undocumented. If in-depth and unbiased study of leaders were done, evaluating them against the norms drawn from ancient works, it would be a helpful blend of literature and corporate history.

But that is a big *if,* because all documents relating to them are not likely to be made available. Managements providing vetted documents may not help researchers in this direction. If people follow the virtues ordained, there will be no need for vetting, as transparency would be ensured. That is holding up the mirror of the hoary past to the present to ensure a virtuous posterity.

## Chapter VII

# Section 2: *Tirukkural*'s Consonance to Modernity

What has family life to do with the man who is a leader? Cold logic may place the family far from the functional realm of a leader, not real life situations. There could be a rare Rudolf Guiliani saying,

> "I have not included details from my personal life in this book. (Leadership) The dissolution of my marriage, for example, had nothing to do with my public performance and never affected it in any way" [24]

**Home and family life**

Abraham Zalesnik says, "Every person's development begins with family." [25] Maintaining that marriage provides a settled life and a peaceful mind, R. S. Garg, a retiree of Indian Foreign Service, says in his book on the *Gita* for executives:

> "Following a value-based life is profitable and beneficial even in the material terms. Indians are now preferred...by big corporations in U.S.A. The reason discovered was that Indians' contribution was more, as their minds were free from suspicions and tensions because of mutual trust between husband and wife. The message is loud and clear: honesty and integrity in married life as in other aspects of life are of paramount importance. Pictures of elders, family and dear ones serve to deepen one's vision and help discover a wider purpose in life." [26]

Writing on animator Walt Disney's formative years, J. Barnes avers,

> "A strict, hard-working father and a fun-loving mother gave Disney the early traits he needed." [27]

Asked about 'influences that shaped her' Anu Aga, CEO of *Thermax*, said,

"I picked up the love of reading from my father. He encouraged me to be independent. I got my sense of humour from my mother. I learned from her to be natural and unpretentious. Without the love and encouragement of my husband

and children I would not have had energy and strength to venture out. My son's honest feedback and critique ...brought me in touch with reality and truth." [28]

What matters is not simply growing within family imbibing values, but facilitating the growth of the wards. Lee Iacocca, commended as a successful leader in the automobile industry who turned out to be an engaging author later, says,

> "Throughout my life, the bottom line I have worried about most was that my kids turn out all right. The only rock that stays steady, the only institution I know that works is the family. I was brought up to believe in it – and I do. Because I think a civilised world can't remain civilised for long, if its foundation is built on anything but family. A city, a state or a country can't be any more than the sum of its vital parts – millions of family units. You can't have a country or a city or a state that is worth a damn, unless you govern within yourself in your day-to-day life. It all starts at home." [29]

Of his father and founder of IBM, Thomas Watson Jr. has this to say:

> "My father was the son of an upstate New York farmer. He grew up in an ordinary but happy home where the means and ...the wants, were modest and the moral environment strict. The important values, as learned them, were to do every job well, to treat all people with dignity and respect, to appear neatly dressed, to be clean and forthright, to be eternally optimistic and above all loyal." [30]

Even as the wards, parents are also expected to be rather demanding. This is a social obligation according to Valluvar. *Kural* couplet says,

> "Pleasant it is to people across the world that parents groom their wards more intelligent than they are." (Kural 68)

How the accomplished parents of J.M. Keynes brought up their son as a renowned economist is history. Sylvia Tiersten writes on Carly Fiorina of Hewlett Packard:

> "...Fiorina grew up without limitations. Despite her sex she could be or do anything she wanted....her parents had exceedingly high expectations for their daughter, so she didn't want to disappoint them." [31]

Two couplets of *Tirukkural* in the same chapter on 'The Wards' point out the duty of the parents and that of the wards:

> 'The father's duty is to project his son as *prima donna* in assemblies.' (67)
>
> 'So shall the ward be that people exclaim: how blessed the father!' (70)

Only such parental responsibility and wards' response will take the society forward on its march for progress through generations.

**The call for vegetarian food**

Even as Vyasa, Valluvar has spoken of the impact of food on man and his attitude to food in 20 couplets. The relevant chapters are 26 and 95, Avoiding Meat and Medicine. In these days of dinner politics or business dinners, political or corporate dining tables do not confine themselves to vegetarian dishes. What does the eating habit of one matter? A littérateur and judicial luminary, S. Maharajan, presents the overseas response to these questions pertinently in his monograph on Tiruvalluvar:

> "The World Vegetarian Congress, having its headquarters in Holland, sent in 1961 a goodwill mission to India....After visiting several places in India, they came to Coimbatore and convened a public meeting. The author of this monograph who happened to preside over the meeting quoted a Kural. At the end of the meeting the European savants rushed to the platform and shouted, "...the Kural you have quoted throws a new light on vegetarianism and inspires us to stick to it." The Kural that captivated the European mind was the one on non-killing. Usually the merits and demerits of vegetarianism are canvassed from the economic, hygienic, medical and cultural points of view. Valluvar went to the bottom of the question and said, 'Unless we eschew violence, from our minds and hearts, we cannot show compassion to our fellow-creatures.' Violence is disruptive of the unity of life, and subversive of the reverence for life, without which (reverence for life) there could be no peace on earth. ...If a man practices non-killing, not mechanically, but out of a genuine respect for all life, he practices a supreme virtue, but if a man resorts to killing, whether the victim of killing is a man, bird or beast, he shows irreverence for life which would form the basis of all

vices such as decoity, rape or murder. Valluvar has most pithily put this idea in *Kural* No: 321, which can be translated as follows: 'What is virtue except non-killing? For killing brings in its train all the other vices.' Representatives of the World vegetarian Congress left Coimbatore saying that their Indian visit had been worthwhile, because they had heard the voice of Valluvar lending a new dimension to vegetarianism." [32]

English literary critic A.C. Ward writes thus on Bernard Shaw abstaining from eat eating because of his reverence for life:

"He became a vegetarian when he was twenty-five. His reading of the works of the English poet Shelley had some influence in leading him to refrain from eating meat, but the stronger motive was his deep feeling that 'animals are our fellow creatures', not to be slain for human food." [33]

Modern writer on management and leadership Robin Sharma advises,

"You must eat to win. When you care your body, you care for your mind." [34]

**Learning**

*Tirukkural* insists that one learn what all he/she should, learn perfectly what is to be learnt, and stand by the learned quotients. Sam Walton who ushered in a revolution in retailing with his network of numerous Wal-Mart stores across the U.S. was an avid learner all through. He had his notepad handy wherever he went, especially in the retail outlets of others. He has gone on record saying,

"We are really not concerned with what (competitors) are doing wrong. We are concerned with what they are doing right.... Although you should learn from competitors, don't follow them blindly." [35]

What to learn is important because one should gain by learning; he should gain al through his life he should continue to learn. Retailer Sam Walton was a life-long learner, going by *Tirukkural*:

'Any place is his; any country is his – to the one who keeps learning. Why doesn't one learn till he dies?' (397)

Stressing on the need for continuous learning, especially for leaders, Jay A. Conger, Professor of Organisational Behaviour at London School of Business says in his Foreword to Leaders Talk Leadership by Ashby Meredith and Stephen Miles:

> "One of the hallmarks of effective leadership in this century will be the capacity to learn and adapt quickly. Years of experience will no longer be enough - and, in some cases, may prove a hindrance. The shelf life of knowledge today is simply too short. Instead, a winning characteristic of the new generation of leaders will be its commitment to personal learning and the ability to generate a "buzz" about learning thought their organisations." [36]

**Listening**

Valluvar calls listening a wealth because it brings in information. In the chapters on Listening, Eloquence and Taking Cues he expresses the nuances of non-verbal communication. What matters is not simply the ability to communicate without words, but to understand what is so communicated. That is possible by discerning and immense capacity to listen to. Of the contemporary relevance of communication, one of the best-selling writers on Management is Mark H. Mc Cormack who has written on Selling, Communicating, Negotiating and other aspects of management. He states,

> "I am a true traditionalist, it is the area of communicating; the goals remain the same: to introduce, instruct, persuade or assert authority. From yesterday's handwritten notes to today's e-mail the architecture of effective communication remains the same. Know your subject, know your audience, know your medium; given the choice, be brief rather than wordy. Keep in mind the difference between a forceful and belligerent tone. Trust the power of a carefully chosen word. Never forget how you would like people to communicate with you." [37]

The psychological impact of the patient listener on the complainant/hearer is imemasuraable. Listening as response to communication deserves a separate research. Nandita Chaudari of New Delhi has just come out with her book Listening to Culture - Constructing Reality from Everyday Talk. Therein she suggests that listening should be cultivated from very young age and parents and grandparents could help much. [38]

Subtleties of listening are scientifically interpreted by Robin Sharma,

"When you constantly keep the lines of communication open, your employees will begin to value you as a leader, ...they will not want to let you down." [39]

Of the capacity to listen, Sharma adds,

"Visionary leaders capture the hearts of their people by deeply listening to them.... Most leaders believe that to lead effectively they need to do most of the talking. They have been brainwashed to believing that leaders speak and followers listen. Visionary leaders know that another of human hunger is the hunger to feel understood. Visionary leaders become excellent listeners...they become known as super communicators... And the person who feels understood is the person who listens when it is your turn to speak... one of the greatest gifts you can ever give anyone is giving them 100 per cent of your attention – listening truly is the highest compliment. Don't interrupt; don't complete the sentence the other has begun. Effective listening is an important leadership discipline. [40]

Valluvar suggests employing personnel who could be mind readers through face-reading. Much the same is what Robin Sharma, a modern leadership specialist, says,

"In my years of business I have discovered that a person's eyes can reveal the truth. They can disclose warmth, insecurity, insincerity or integrity if one takes the time to study them." [41]

Sharma says why and how looking into the eyes is important:

"Human beings are visual creatures. Eighty-three percent of our sensory input comes through our eyes so that often we neglect much of what we hear... More than 90 percent of business people forget the name of the person they have heard it. The reason is that as soon as we meet someone new, our brains start processing all the visual and tactile information such as height, weight, gender, strength of handshake and facial expression. In process the name escapes our attention...The second reason most leaders are not excellent listeners is that human beings process the ability to listen at the rate of about 500 words per minute, yet we

speak at much slower rate of 100 to 125 words per minute. With all that space left to fill, our minds tend to wander." [42]

**Enthusiasm**

'One with undaunted will is on the trail of wealth.' (594)

asserts Valluvar, which has a distant empirical echo in a different locale. It is William Wrigley Jr. a chewing gum manufacturer of Chicago, who has on his desk this saying:

'Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.' [43]

**Attitude**

Ray Kroc, the legend of a leader with Mc Donald, has averred:

"I believe that if you think small, you will stay small." [44]

Valluvar has said,

" Minds rise just as high as lotus to the surface of the water." (Kural - 595)

Much the same is the opinion of Thomas Golisano of Paychex. He is categorical, "You can teach ability – You cannot teach attitude." [45]

**Pure mind**

Valluvar accords prime importance to mind. A pure mind is a paramount leadership trait. If purity must be cultivated, all other good things will follow.

Much the same is the stand of modern thinkers and acclaimed leaders. Robin S. Sharma, a writer on Leadership with some best sellers to his credit, points out,

"Most leaders believe that effectiveness and excellence come from external factors like an efficient work force or application of the latest technology. The truth of the matter as visionary leaders have known over centuries is that success is an inside job. Excellence begins within. Leadership in world begins with leadership in your life." [46]

What Lord Krishna calls a quiet and unruffled mind in the *Gita* is extolled by the modern writer Robin Sharma thus,

"All humanity's great advances, whether technological or artistic came not from frenzied activity but from the deep reflection and interrogation that quiet time brings." [47]

Again Sharma quotes no less a person than Sir Edmund Hillary who scaled the Everest, the peak of the Himalayas,

"It is not the mountain we conquer but ourselves." [48]

Noteworthy that Valluvar also uses the image of mountain when he speaks of controlling one's mind.

"Loftier than a mountain is the greatness of the self-controlled." (Kural 124)

**The truth, the whole truth**

A leader receives a lot of information in his normal routine. He has to sift untruth from truth. The truth matters, not the sources. One should not be misguided by the status of the sources. Of this aspect of leadership, Aviation pioneer William Boeing has had the following saying on a plaque at the entrance of his chamber:

'There is no authority except facts. Facts are obtained by accurate observation. Deductions are to be made only from facts." [49]

To those like William Boeing these *Kural* couplets could be commended:

'Go into grains of truth, whatever be the source.' (355)

'Sources apart, the wise discern the meaning of what is heard.' (423)

**Casting away ego**

'The one free from ego shall gain everything here and in heaven.' (346)

AmeriCredit's Michael Barrington, told his people ego's ravages, much like Valluvar, that egos spoil individuals and institutions:

'Leave egos at the door. They have no place here. We champion team work.' [50]

Modern leadership's main concern is casting away ego and encouraging others to do so. That alone can facilitate teamwork, which the ego and clash of egos mar.

'True leadership is very different from management. Leadership is about others and not about self,' [51]

so specific is James Despain in advising leaders to cast away any trace of ego.

**Communicating**

Valluvar has covered in no unmistaken terms the purpose and modes of communication. One's knowledge must be revealed in his expressions without any trace of conceit and the speech should gain the intended results.

> "One who cannot elucidate what he has learnt is like a flower without fragrance." (650)

Here is an advice from Robin Sharma on communication and human relations:

> "If you spend your days communicating your message and building richer relationships rather than micro-managing as most leaders do, there will be fewer misunderstandings and less conflict." [52]

**Mentoring**

The other factor that can exercise a sober influence on an individual's growth path in becoming a leader is the guidance by elders, what the modern jargon calls 'mentoring'. Valluvar devotes a chapter for this and Vyasa also presents numerous instances of the master-disciple interaction.

The *Raja Niti* of Bhishma, the penultimate part of the epic, also insists on a leader being well schooled in scriptures and taking the counsel of elders. What is meant for kings is relevant for the subjects too. The pioneer of self-help books Dale Carnagie looked to those he most admired. Sean Higgins points out,

> "His most famous books rely on quotations from and stories about Abe Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin and other wise figures." [53]

**Delegation**

Again it is Ray Kroc who says,

"I believe if you hire a man to do a job, you ought to get out of the way and let him do it. If you doubt his ability you shouldn't have hired him...."[54]

Valluvar who predates Ray Kroc by 21 centuries has said much the same on selection process, recruitment, training, delegation and non-interference.

Having chosen one for a task, leave it for him to do it. (517)

Selecting one without scrutiny, and suspecting the one chosen after scrutiny will entail in endless troubles. (510)

**Being pro-active**

All the couplets of *Tirukkural* in the chapter 68 *Being Pro-active*, meant for rulers in monarchic regime are relevant to modern leaders as they offer guidelines in carrying out assignments. The corporate connotation of the couplets could be:

* Delay after deliberation is dangerous. Avoid delay.
* Some work can wait; but priority must be heeded to.
* Nothing should be left incomplete; it will boomerang.
* Success should not suffer for lack of speed. Be fast.
* Be forewarned of impediments to tide over them.
* Funds, time, place, means and deed call for attention.
* Consequences of the action should be thought of.
* Be an apprentice to an expert; get trained on the job.
* Take to proper means to accomplish the work.
* Befriend the estranged before making new friends.
* Make peace with bigger players in the industry, to avoid your employees losing jobs.

The above tenets advocated by Tiruvalluvar are practiced in the corporate sector, though *Tirukkural* is yet to find its place in world's corporate literature.

**Plan, aim and shoot**

Of planning and execution the two American leaders have said thus:

"If I had eight hours to chop down a tree, I would spend six hours sharpening my axe," Abe Lincoln is quoted to have said.

"Many a brilliant idea has been lost because the man who dreamed it

lacked the spunk or the spine to it across," [55]

Bank of America's A.P. Giannini has said.

Both these ideas find expression in *Tirukkural:*

'Ponder over before you act; hindsight is disgrace.' (467)

'The strong mind gets things done, as willed.' (666)

**Always aim high**

Of aiming things big and high and pursuing them A.P. Giannini has said,

'It does not matter if you do not always hit the exact bull's eye. The other rings in the targets score points, too.' [56]

IBM's Thomas Watson used to tell his people,

'It is better to aim at perfection and miss than it is to aim at imperfection and have it.' [57]

How happy would Watson have been if he had known that Tiruvalluvar had said exactly that with a metaphor!

"Aim big, even if you lose a little. Better take on an elephant that skips your spear than the rabbit that falls by your arrow. " (772)

Robin S. Sharma, modern leadership specialist is likewise metaphoric,

"Most people are ant-chasers, rather than elephant hunters." [58]

## Chapter VII

# Section 3: The *Mahabharata's* Empirical Excellence

In most languages semantics twisted out of context some well-meant words. The hit-list in English language includes '*myth.*' One is eager to tag the verb 'exploding' seldom emulating. "It is all a myth" is an expression that does not lend a respectable reckoning. On the other hand, the right myths, taken in the right perspective are pedagogues in self-study. The myths in epics like the *Mahabharata* are such; they cannot be brushed aside as supernatural elements. They teach the characters therein and through them to others vital lessons on life and career. Wherever myths shroud the rulers the context and the outcome should be studied to extract the latent lessons.

For a serious bid in the Western context, to restore the original meaning and intent to myths, credit should be given to Joseph Campbell. Asserts he, rightly so,

> "Our archetypes acquired through identity with myths and myths create heroes out of those who heed them." [59]

If at all the Mahabharata has myths, they are plots provoking debates or events portraying one's personality quotients. They are inspirational, though supernatural. If not anything these myths/legends/supernatural elements, point to the fact that

'every human being needs to belong, to be part of the whole,' to use the words of media leader Alyque Padamsee in his book *A Double Life*, describing his self-development and his life as a leader. [60]

**Mind and Attitude**

Much is being spoken of stress-management these days. That subject finds place in the curriculum of corporate trainers. R.S. Garg who interprets the *Gita* for contemporary executives as a manual of self-management. says,

> "In fact, stress management is nothing, if not self-management. Certainly the modern man does not need a psychiatrist or a psychologist for self-management. He needs himself with the right state of mind and right attitude. The two are not

different. The skills for achieving the goal of HAPPINESS are provided for in PHILOSOPHY, NOT IN ECONOMICS. (Emphasis, the author's) The *Gita* is a practical example. All of us are contemporary Arjunas. At times we are not clear about our objectives. We are confused whether to do this." [61]

Two most important leadership quotients drawn from the *Bhagavad Gita*, said to be the essence of the *Mahabharata*, are: (i) a calm, unruffled mind that does not gloat over success and grieve over failures, (ii) discharging duties without expecting rewards. If a subtle management interpretation is to be given, taking Krishna-Arjuna relationship an allegory, Krishna is the leader and Arjuna the manager. To execute is the manager's duty. The leader directs and takes care of the results. In the modern Kurukshetra of conflicting claims, one is obliged to be the manager and the leader.

**Perception of power**

Mahatma Gandhi who figures in the leadership traits as elucidated in *Tirukkural*, regarding truth and Non-violence, also finds mention when leadership is discussed by the *Gita's* dicta.. He felt he had a duty to discharge, that of liberating India from the British bond. He could do it, by adopting the twin virtues – Truth and Non-Violence. After gaining his end, the country's political freedom, he did not aspire for any position of power. Not only that, he could create a band of leaders too.

This kind of self-awareness is accepted and advocated by some successful modern leaders too. Says Hewlett-Packard's Carly Fiorina,

> "To be successful, you have to love what you do, which means you need to know yourself pretty well." [62]

Brownies Wise of Tupperware, without her possible introduction to the *Gita*, echoes the import of one querying within himself to judge the fitness,

> "First, ask yourself if your desire for this thing is great enough that you would work hard enough to get it. Second, will this thing honestly be good for you and the people around you?" [63]

**Soul-searching**

Apart from quietude, Vyasa advocated, through Lord Krishna, a soul-searching exercise that does not sidestep the intellect and the instincts, but carries them along in the inward journey, so that combination gets manifest in leaders discharging their duties. Such was a woman political leader's feat just a few decades ago. It was Golda Meir, credited to be a unique female leader as Prime Minister of Israel in the bastion of male power, with the force of her soul-stirring commitment to her people.

> "If not for her Israel may have perished in its early years when there was never enough people, weapons, money or political support." Biographer Ralph Martin described Golda Meir as possessing 'an instinct and intuition, both logical and intuitive at the same time,' [64]

which is a commendable but curious combination. That was to place heart and head at the command of soul. She did it. Others too can, provided they understand what leadership is by ancient Indian standards.

**Regardless of rewards**

The *Gita's* oft-quoted message is not to mess up with purpose and reward. *"Do your duty, fruit is not thy concern"* is repeated in discourses; but understanding of it is difficult, especially if the question - "Why at all do anything without expecting rewards?" is raised. The answer is in the form of a pithy story, easily plausible to youngsters. This too is sourced from Robin Sharma.

> "Once a young student travelled many miles to find a famous spiritual master. When he finally met this man, he told him that his main goal in life was to be the wisest man in the land. That is why he needed the best teacher. Seeing the young boy's enthusiasm, the master agreed to share his knowledge with him and took him under his wing. 'How long will it take before I find enlightenment?' the boy asked. 'At least five years,' replied the master. 'That is too long,' said the boy. 'I can't wait for five years! What if I study twice as hard as the rest of your students?' 'Ten years', came the response. 'Ten years, well, then how about with every ounce of my mental concentration? Then how long would it take for me to

become a wise man that I have always dreamed of becoming?' 'Fifteen years,' replied the master. 'How come every time I tell you I work harder to reach my goal, you tell me it will take longer?" 'The answer is clear,' said the teacher, "With one eye focused on the reward, there is only one eye to focus on the purpose.' [65] That one loses hold of the purpose when he focuses on the reward is what the *Gita* says. Yet this story interprets the import better.

**'You are what you eat'**

Food is one thing that most writers on leadership have overlooked. Just a few have touched upon that at random workshops. Presentations have slides on stress, hypertension, indigestion and other ills. Even there most of the talk is more on mending other habits than food. But food has its impact on man in more than one way. Health is one thing; but that is not the end.

Bhishma tells Yudhishtra, "Simple food and drink obtained without effort, and luxurious food produced with fear, widely differ from each other." [66]

Lord Krishna says categorically in the *Gita,*

"You are what you eat, and, you eat, based on what you are." XVII –8

Krishna tells of the impact of food on the character and conduct of a person. Even as the *Gunas*, (strands of nature) *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas* in men, food also has its soft, spicy and slothful types. Sometimes food causes dullness. If one works as much as he takes food, it works out well; not food just for its own sake.

Another relevant piece of advice for leaders is food habits, what they take and what they give others - food that must make one work, not loathe. Men labour a living; work hard, find means for food. So are animals and birds. If it is their nature to go and work hard, the particular being should be allowed to do so; rather encouraged to earn food by hard labour. Anything else is loathsomeness. IBM's Thomas J. Watson Jr. cites a fable by Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard:

"A man on the coast of Zealand who liked to watch the wild ducks fly south in great flocks each fall. Out of charity, he took to putting feed for them in a nearby pond. After a while some of the ducks no longer bothered to fly south;

they wintered in Denmark on what he fed them. In time they flew less and less. When the wild ducks returned, the others would circle up to greet them, but then, head back to their feeding ground on the pond. After three or four years they grew so lazy and fat that they found difficulty in flying..." [67]

Soren Kierkegaard's message matches with Valluvar's and Vyasa's. Says Lord Krishna in the *Gita* that it is easier to weaken the strong than strengthen the weak. So is it with men and fowls. If a *rajasic* person (brawny) tries, he can become *sattvic* (brainy) with conscious efforts on learning and changing the food habits. The *tamasic* persons like the spot-fed wild ducks, seldom learn anything to grow up, because they take the food that suits them.

The message driven home by Kierkegaard is that – you can make wild ducks tame, but you can never make tame ducks wild again. This piece of wisdom, related in the recent years, brings out pointedly on two counts what Valluvar and Vyasa have said on Charity and Food Habits.

On the part of the duck-feeder it is unmerited charity. If not given food, they would have flown, got the food after physical exertion and remained healthy and active. The kind-hearted person's misjudged charity made them lazy. That is no charity, by the standards of Valluvar and Vyasa. As the *Gita* says, food decides one's personality. Wild ducks that were tamed could not be invigorated again as wild ducks. They lost their nature. The *rajasic* could be made *tamasic* and the *tamasic* shall never turn *rajasic*, whereas the ideal progress would be to move towards *sattvic* and stay *sattvic*, which means controlling or regulating the *rajasic* quotients.

**Quietude**

Vyasa speaks of meditation through Lord Krishna and again through Bhishma. S.K. Chakraborty, Professor of Management, Calcutta University, with a penchant for native moorings, considers meditation 'a devoted culture of the *sattva* and determined control of *rajas*. It is 'conscious awareness of the Transcendent while at work.' He cites K.V.K. Raju of the Nagarjuna group:

"In our business life, we all face an unusual problem; adversaries crop up without our knowing it. Some of them create such obstacles as can destroy our entire business. I have had my share of it and am happy to say... that one can influence the thought process of others by passing on the positive vibrations towards them. This has worked wonders...we never looked upon problems as problems but converted them into God-given new opportunities...The regular practice of meditation and attending daily spiritual classes have benefited me." [68]

Another leader inspired by the ideals of the *Mahabharata*, cited by management consultant Sampat P. Singh and academic S. K. Chakraborty in their different books is R. K. Talwar. Singh calls him a leader driven by a mission. Adds K.V.K. Raju,

"I have first-hand knowledge about the deep, inward approach to management adopted by R.K. Talwar, former Chairman of State Bank of India and Industrial Development Bank of India. Whenever faced with an intellectually baffling management problem, he used to retire into a quite (sic) corner within his office-room itself, and by silencing his mind opened to the transcendental intelligence. Even today the reverence for him in SBI is something to realize and feel for oneself. Once retired no more chasing of Committee Chairmanships, Board Memberships and the like..." [69]

To be noted in this context is what consultant Sampat P. Singh subtly pointed out:

"There is a vital difference between 'the personality' and 'the self.' The latter is often called 'the soul,' which can be defined in contemporary language as a guiding factor which is different from the conscious personality."

If R.K. Talwar, P.L. Tandon or K.V.K Raju and quite a few of their clan like Azim Premji and N.R. Narayana Murthy are reckoned as business leaders, it is not in the ordinary sense as managers of big corporate houses; but as those who exemplified leadership by managing own their selves.

That, in deed, is one's evolution of personality from manager to leader or fitment in the much-needed role of manager-cum-leader.

The aforesaid account of business and social leaders apart, conceptual-cum case-study analysis of leadership components would reinforce the relevance of the primary sources. *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* specify that leadership is evolution of the personality within, directing one to righteous action through generosity.

Both the texts call for focus, energy, realising full well the elements of time, place and evaluating own strength and working toward purpose.

Modern management theorists or business leaders do not tell anything more or anything different. There lies the relevance of the primary texts to the modern context. One of the latest titles under corporate literature (2004) is A Bias for Action by Heike Bruch and Sumantra Ghoshal; its subtitle 'How Effective Managers Harness Their Willpower, Achieve Results and Stop Wasting Time' tells everything. [70]

The authors classify modern managerial behaviour into four types: The Frenzied, The Procrastinators, The Detached and The Purposeful, by their research, as they say. They add,

> "*The Frenzied:* Forty percent of managers are distracted by the myriad tasks that they juggle each day. They are highly energetic, but very unfocused and appear to others frenzied, desperate, and hasty.
>
> *The Procrastinators:* Thirty percent procrastinate on doing the work that really matters to the organisation because they lack energy and focus. They often feel insecure and fear failure.
>
> *The Detached:* Twenty percent of managers are disengaged or detached from their work altogether. They are focused but lack energy and often seem aloof, tense and apathetic.
>
> *The Purposeful:* Only 10 percent get the job done. They are highly focused and energetic and come across as reflective and calm amid chaos."

If analysed by *Bhagavad Gita's* division of the the *Gunas,* innate nature of the individuals, the above categories represent respectively the *Rajasic*, the *Tamasic,* the transitional and the *Sattvic*. Leadership courses shall motivate the first three to rise up to the fourth stage. That is the expected transformation from *Being* to *Becoming.*

## Summary of Chapter VII

# Native Moorings of Modern Indian Leaders

This Chapter of the applied aspects of native norms of leadership has three sections explaining citing Indian political leaders Gandhiji and Rajaji, both wielding influence over the society, the former without holding any office of authority and the latter as an ascetic while holding offices from Member of Municipal Council to that of the Governor General of India.

They proved that Attitude and Service matter, not positions of authority.

Corporate leaders, Indian and Western have acknowledged the influence of the members of the family in their life and career. They include Anu Aga of India to Carly Fiorina of Hewlett Packard, U.S. All those cited here have followed one or the other of the norms espoused in the Primary Sources and similar Western texts of wisdom.

Indian corporate captains, steeped in native moorings, albeit higher education abroad commend among other things Vision, Values, Energy, Confidence, Innovation and Team Building as leadership traits.

Leaders cited here illustrate that the man behind the leader is vital in the discharge of the functions of a leader. Evolution of a leader is transformation from what he is to what he ought to be – progression from *Being* to *Becoming* through harnessing willpower to achieve results without wasting time.

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# Chapter VIII

## Future Leadership, Literature and the Academia

## Introduction to Chapter VIII

# Future Leadership, Literature and the Academia

This Chapter substantiates in two sections that literature is a potent pedagogic source to learn more on Leadership, to face the challenges of future.

The first section seeks to identify what is perceived to be the lacking input in management education in the U.S. where it was started and where it flourishes.

It also states how scholars establish that works like Shakespeare's plays have a lot to tell on leadership, a key management obligation.

The Buddhist literature and the Bible are commended among the works that inspire leadership. They are approached from management perspectives nowadays.

The second section points out how legends and epics, once the sources of inspiration for youngsters have ceased to form part of the lore of bedtime stories for kids.

The hurly burly of modern life leaves little time or interest for the parents to relate bedtime stories, whatever be the source.

Inside or off the classrooms, the teachers are obliged to compensate what the parents fail to do; that enjoins more responsibility on the academia.

This section refers to emerging challenges to leadership in the third millennium and places man at the epicentre, in line with most ancient books of wisdom.

Profiles of ideal leaders, as constructed by Valluvar and Vyasa, authors of the primary sources -*Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* - are presented here for guidelines.

# Chapter VIII

## Section 1: Future Leadership, Literature and the Academia

If the mid-19th century gave rise to industrialisation, the early 20th century caused the emergence of a handful of management schools in the U.S. Admittedly the U.S. still retains its status as the much sought after destination for management education. Business education's origin could be traced to the University of Pennsylvania's bachelor's programme in 1881, thanks to efforts of businessman Joseph Wharton. A distant pioneer to this was 'the Prussian school of bureaucratic statecraft, which developed an agenda very much like those of today's business schools.' [1]

Dartmouth College in the U.S. was the first school to offer a master's degree in business in 1900 allowing a few undergraduates to extend their course by an year. Still neither Harvard nor Stanford had an easy time in those years.

To use the words of Canadian management expert and author of interesting books Henry Mintzberg the sponsors from the business community were unenthusiastic, students were boisterous and sceptical, university colleagues and trustees remained jealous and cynical. While thirty-three students enrolled in the Harvard MBA in 1908, only eight of them returned for the second year. Today flaunting a Harvard, Stanford or Wharton MBA is fashionable, prestigious and remunerative.

However, not long ago none other than Professor of management studies in the U.S. was alarmingly frank on the hollowness of MBA programmes there. Mintzberg candidly discloses such an academic bankruptcy in his Preface to his book of 2004 Managers Not MBAs:

> "Some years ago the dean of a prominent business school (Richard West of New York University) claimed, "If I was not dean of this school, I would be writing a book on the bankruptcy of American management education." [2]

This startling statement calls for a stocktaking of management education in U.S. and elsewhere. Thereby the missing curricular quotient could be identified, sourced and supplied to equip general as well as management education to meet future

challenges. Hollowness or shallowness is not peculiar to the branch of management studies; other disciplines also lack value inputs in the curriculum. As managing institutions is not confined to MBAs alone, value inculcation in other branches is also keenly felt. Of the post 2000 AD plight of management Henry Mintzberg points out,

> "A survey before the collapse of Enron and other corporations reported that only 47 percent of the employees of American companies saw their leaders as people of high personal integrity. (*The Gazette*, October 2000) A more recent study by Rutgers University of Connecticut found that "58 percent of workers think that most top executives are only looking out for themselves, even if it harms the company, while 33 percent of think that top executives are interested in doing a good job for their company (in Greenhouse 2002). Can we really continue to tolerate this situation?" [3]

This moot question raises on its trail a few more questions: Were not institutions get managed fairly well before the MBA boom? Are all the managers MBAs? Do the non-MBA managers lag behind in managing or leading? What sort of formal education did go into the making of the manager before the B schools were born?

Based on the Indian experience it could be said that general education in the past contained man-making quotients; those made men function as good managers. Schools then offered 'Moral Instruction' as part of the curriculum for all students. Language teaching was done with the help of extracts from the best works of literature that went into the textbooks. They espoused values. Language study was, in fact, a literary study and literature inculcated values. That language could be taught scientifically is a lingual possibility. But the method is bereft of life.

Once for rural tourists the two spots of attraction in Chennai, then Madras, were '*seththa college*' and '*usir college,* museum and the zoo respectively. The idiom has lost their currency now. But looking back, it presented the vital difference – between life dormant and life vibrant. A museum is a museum, after all. But a zoo is lively, refreshingly pulsating with life. Teaching ornithology with skeletons in the museum is just bone counting. Observing birds in sanctuaries is meeting life in its vivacity.

Grammar teaching through literature and or moral instruction with the help of wisdom books was meeting life in its beauty and truth, the two inextricably together.

**Shakespeare, the management consultant**

Crafting a new curriculum with inputs on values of life warrants more homework for curriculum developers. They might do well to resurrect William Shakespeare in the classrooms. Among the prescribed textbooks of the past were the plays of Shakespeare, which taught language as well as morals.

Even as *moral instruction* departed the academia, a quarter century ago or much earlier, Shakespeare was also bidden adieu, yielding to the wisdom of those who held that language could be taught independent of literature. All undergraduate students in Science and Humanities streams in India had a paper on Shakespeare, with two plays, a comedy and a tragedy; almost all the plays were covered by rotation.

American authors Norman Augustine and Kenneth Adelman say that Shakespeare is taught in more than 90 per cent of American High Schools and in all colleges, with the bard looked at from management perspectives. They say North America alone accounted for 140 Shakespearean summer festivals and theatres and 300 plus movies including five in 1999. That is just literature and entertainment. But Shakespeare has travelled farther from the stage and the academia in U.K. and in the U.S. They add,

> "... a growing number of executives find that the time spent with the bard is a sound investment, and unpredictably enjoyable. The Bard boom has hit the boardroom. For business leaders find that Shakespeare's plays offer deft and gripping explorations of the world of power which remain as relevant today as they were in the sixteenth century. The lessons that they teach are remarkably useful in today's tough corporate universe." [4]

The authors hold Shakespeare relevant to modern management because,

> "... business involves people and people – fundamentally – don't change. The essence of business is thus remarkably constant... Shakespeare is fascinated by the depths and complications of human relationships: boss to subordinate, colleague to colleague, lawyer to client, customer to salesman, parent to child, and

friend to friend. And he probes the range of human emotions – ambition, hurt, pride, grief and love – as well as the motivation behind our acts, wise or foolish, generous or malicious." [5]

In their Preface to their book Shakespeare in Charge with a long subtitle 'The Bard's Guide to Leading and Succeeding on the Business Stage,' authors Augustine and Adelman cite William Hazlitt, "To know the force of human genius, we should read Shakespeare," [6] and Helen Whall, a professor of English, "Shakespeare is the best mind-altering subject I know." [7]

**Wise men and wisdom books influence**

Shakespeare has presented the world intelligibly and in a time-tested manner too. Approaching the bard from modern management angle is refreshing and laudable. The western mind that understands easily Shakespeare may not get at the whole import of eastern thinkers and writers. Still some scholars make attempts.

Like Shakespeare Indian Prince-turned ascetic, Gautama, the Buddha, has evoked, of late, an interest on leadership in the business circles. Buddha was a psychologist and a teacher; he was not a god. Authors Franz Metcalf and BJ Callagher Hately, in their thought-provoking title, What Would Buddha Do at Work? feel that many employees and organisations are yearning today for a leader who is Chief Spiritual Officer, not a Chief Executive Officer.

The authors relate Buddha thought-provokingly to the modern corporate world, which as they and others feel, needs spiritual buoyancy. Franz Metcalf and Callagher Hately recommend Building a Business the Buddhist Way by Geri Larkin and a few other works of the Zen variety.

They find something new in the oriental wisdom. Their reading or interpreting the text might be limited, as in the case of Franz Metcalf and BJ Callagher Hately, who with 101 quotes from Buddhist literature, have attempted to inculcate the value quotient in employees. What they tell as the Buddha's view of charity could have been more pointed and exact if they had been exposed to the lore of Indian literature, especially the primary sources of this research *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata*.

# Chapter VIII

## Section 2: Mandate of Primary Sources: Man, the Measure

*Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* hold that that the man in the leader matters. They are keen even on the food habits and the love life of leaders. This growth process, due to start from home, obliges the young ones to imbibe values of life in their formative period. Substance apart, *Tirukkural's* style also suits the exposition methodology of those delivering lectures on management topics, coining catchy one-liners. All couplets of Tirukkural are such relatable and retainable pithy expressions.

### *Tirukkural's* Profile of a Leader

Valluvar expects the leader to be righteous, generous and committed; be he a family head, corporate CEO or a political leader, he should not give up love. He should seek wealth and pleasure by the right means. A leader shall be modest, easily accessible, loving, noble, honourable, courteous and perfect. He shall be hospitable, health conscious with right intake of good and timely food, avoid liquor and meat. He shall be sweet tongued and be aware of the enemies within. He should be free from base desires. He should judge things and persons impartially and have forbearance.

A leader shall always be learning, empathetically listening, truthful, he shall avoid slander, anger and hatred. Pure minded, he shall not envy others or think of coveting what belongs to others, wealth or wife. He does not cause injury, mental or physical, following the virtue of non-violence. He shall be erudite and eloquent, have retentive memory, but not be conceited.

Friendly, he should evaluate friends; he be wary of harmful and unbecoming persons. He shall respect the rule of law and is just; does not take undue liberties with any. He should be charitable even to his enemies. A leader shall be impartial, able and shall not resort to meanness. He shall behave righteously, worthy of emulation. Not ostentatious, he shall be straightforward, remain grateful and make others stay so. He shall educate and train others. He shall not commit frauds. Not dreading the audience, he shall speak purposefully. He shall act with forethought. Let him be resolute; knowing what to do and how to do, realising that the methods are also important.

Realising his own strength, he shall choose the right time and place. While being industrious, he shall not be hasty. He dares destiny with perseverance. He shall test his deputies; trust them; assign work and remain non-interfering, having judged them already. He shall read faces and minds and get at the root of hostility. He shall discriminate between good and bad, avoid base people, keep the right type of ministers for wise counsel. Guided by elders, he shall never offend the great. He has charitable mind and charitable hands, knowing hoarding wealth would not be of any use to the seeker or to those around.

He works for growth and attends to the basic need of man - food. He helps the society grow. He is conscious that the command strength is a matter of pride and that the country is what the ruler makes it. He gathers intelligence through his spies. He gains wealth by the right means. He uses it in right channels. He employs right type of envoys and gains by them. He shall lead an unblemished family life, not having extra-marital affairs. For all his extolling asceticism in some couplets, Valluvar expects man to lead a normal life within the confines of matrimony.

## *The Mahabharata's* Profile of a Leader (From Bhishma's *Raja Niti*)

The eight key traits of leadership, according to Bhishma, are: steadiness, cleverness, restraint, intelligence, health, patience, bravery and attention to the mandates of time and place. A leader should be farsighted and exercise his intelligence and decide on his action. He should judiciously create, protect and distribute wealth. He should discriminate righteousness from unrighteousness.

With intelligence, sharpened by a study of scriptures, a leader should decide his course of actions. He should not procrastinate. In treating his personnel, he shall have no malice. Knowing that mildness has force in it, a leader should apply it effectively. He should behave with humility and have a tranquil mind. He should be patient and sweet-tongued. A leader should be pro-active and strive to become great. He should have higher learning, wisdom and courage. He should be cautious enough to avoid damages. He should know how to handle his friends and foes. He should have forethought and presence of mind. Self-controlled, avoiding envy and slander, he should be honest and brave. He should respect elders.

## *The Mahabharata's* Profile of a Leader (From *Vidura Niti* )

The leader is intelligent, energetic, strong, alacritous and persevering. He has reverence for others. Content, righteous and taking up praiseworthy acts, he rejects what is blamable. He shares wealth with those that serve him. He chooses learned, kind, clean, incorruptible, able men without pride and without an inclination to procrastinate. Endued with humility, he is never indifferent to the sufferings of others. He is never haughty and does not address harsh words to others. He is known by his deportment, honesty and good conduct. He is tested at seasons of panic.

He stays tranquil. He is free from anger, pride, false modesty, stupefaction and vanity; he has a heart to forgive. With faith in the high ends of life, he has his senses collected. He does not rejoice at honours, nor grieve at slights. He remains cool. He is not a prey to folly, insolence, sins, disloyalty and crookedness. He learns quickly, listens patiently, pursues his object with judgement, not from desire. He strives, having commenced anything, till it is completed.

Discreet, he does not divulge the counsels. Before venturing he considers the competence of the agent, nature of the act and its purpose. He does not waste time. He does not desire hostilities and he does not disregard even a weak foe. He proceeds with intelligence gathered on his foes. He waits for the right opportunity to strike. He realises the importance of time, place and means. He knows scriptures. He is straightforward. He understands that perseverance is the root of prosperity and of gain. Though learned, wise and virtuous, he asks the advice of elders who do not mislead. He knows the science of argumentation, possesses genius and can interpret the meaning of scriptures. He speaks boldly, can converse on various subjects.

He does not return the slander or reproaches of others. He does not humiliate and insult others; does not quarrel with friends. He abstains from companionship with those that are vile and low. He trusts only those to be trusted. He avoids sleep, drowsiness, fear, anger, indolence, procrastination, crimes, theft and outrage on the wives of others. He is diet conscious. He eats sparingly for his health, long life and ease: his progeny also becomes healthy thereby. He is content with the name he wins and the umbrella that is held over his head.

## *The Mahabharata's* Profile of a Leader (Lord Krishna's *Gita*)

The leader should be steady-minded, the same in pain and pleasure, victory and defeat. He should discharge dispassionately his duties, without seeking any personal reward. He should know food habits influence his mind. A man is what he eats; therefore a leader should be choosy in his food habits. He should work hard, for work's sake and with full control of his mind and senses.

A leader should realise that desire and anger are counterparts; he should respond accordingly. Greed is but grotesque desire. If a leader casts off his desires, he will not turn greedy. A leader should adopt the four ways to control the mind. They are regular practice, relentless enquiry, non-attachment and firm faith. He should have a charitable mind, should have compassion. Gentle, modest and not fickle-minded, he should not covet. A leader should avoid pride, ostentation, hypocrisy, pompousness, arrogance, vanity, anger and harshness.

**The inculcating responsibility**

Expectedly, to ensure an orderly, well-led world, the aforesaid quotients should get into the psyche of those who hold positions of authority. An early imbibing of them would help them and the society. If they were to learn and practice what is expected of them after assuming leadership/managerial roles, the gestation period could be excruciating for them and the society. This, the, enjoins on the family and the academia the inalienable responsibility to inculcate values of man-making at the very early stage in the life of everyone, as people are going to lead/manage their own affairs and those of others, whatever be their position or level of operation.

Time was when elders in joint families in India had occasions to relate bedtime stories to kids from epics and legends. The modern lifestyle, the growing urbanisation, with both parents in employment, the grandparents not living with grandchildren, kids do not hear bedtime stories anymore, except in some families.

The change had taken place even around the middle of the 20th century. But the fast changing social milieu grants no time or occasion to parents or grandparents to teach the wards values espoused in works like *Tirukkural* or *The Mahabharata*.

Of this social change scholar Krishna Chaitanya notes with much regret:

> "I first learned the story of the epic from my grandmother; then read many abridged versions as a boy; later read the complete work, and several times over, making fresh discoveries every time. The social, economic and cultural transition of the last few decades has denied similar opportunities for familiarisation to the younger generation. The children of the nucleate family see their grandmother only during annual holidays, which allow brief sojourns to the home provinces from distant work places. The parents, if they knew the epic, have very little time to narrate it to their children ...The task (with elders) is twofold: to induce the younger generation to benefit from their great legacy; to indicate the ideal manner in which the legacy can be assimilated by the younger generation." [8]

If elder members of the family find not time to inculcate values in the young minds, the academia that finds time, value-inculcation does not have dedicated slot in the curriculum, though the knowledge-pack to be worth for application in life should cater to both external than internal dimensions of personality development.

General educational institutions apart, even reputed management schools do not appear to revise the course content to foster leadership. Regrets Henry Mintzberg:

> "Business schools pride themselves in teaching about new product development and strategy change; yet their flagship, the MBA is a 1908 degree with a 1950s strategy."

Five decades have passed since management curriculum was substantially revised according to Mintzberg. If clues are to be taken by the current thinking of writers of books on Management and Leadership, both management education and general education should foster both tradition and modernity with a liberal addition of native legacy and cross-cultural exposure of leadership.

That is possible if the academia grooms students as practitioners of values within its precincts. Treated as casual travellers to roadside inns they cannot grow as leaders. As parents seem to be losing their hold on their wards teachers should be falconers, with a firm hold on their falcons, directing their flight.

**'The falcon cannot hear the falconer'**

But far from native moorings, the wards are as distant from their teachers as they are from their parents. They lack value-orientation. As W.B. Yeats has allegorised in '*The Second Coming*':

> "Turning and turning in the widening gyre
> The falcon cannot hear the falconer."

Parents and teachers should be falconers. Academic apathy, as of the filial one, could unmoor students as well as teachers because today's students are tomorrow's teachers. The standard of teachers leaves much to be desired. Here is an ensemble:

On the eve of the Independence Day of 2004, a teacher who faced questions in a national network's regional telecast,

> "What is Gandhiji's first name? What is the title of his autobiography?

answered in exasperation, as reported by the Tamil monthly *Manjari,*

> "I don't know; I needn't, I am a mathematics teacher."

A lady, fresh into employment, who could not answer the same questions said that she was a commerce postgraduate and Gandhiji was not part of her syllabus. [9]

Sad that Gandhi, hailed by the West as an ideal leader, who died just less than 50 years ago, has limited introduction with a section of modern students, teachers and others in his home country.

As of now, the Indian educational institutions that churn out skilled employees and professionals including lawyers, doctors and managers, puts bones in the system, not the life-cells, which is a must for any branch of study, even commerce. Value inculcation is breathing life into academic pursuits, science or humanities, as the beneficiaries will have to assume responsibilities for social changes and they should be duly equipped for the task.

Many colleges and Universities in the United Kingdom offer a degree course that is called PPE – Politics, Philosophy and Economics. Studying the Primary Sources of this thesis Tirukkural and *The Mahabharata* is another PPE course with a difference.

**For Business, Study Philosophy**

Any day the role of Literature and Philosophy in the academia cannot be side-lined. That is why Thomas Hurka, a Canadian Professor of Philosophy has noted thus in his impressive newspaper article, "*Interested in Business? Study Philosophy*:

"How should Canada educate students to compete successfully in the business world? Some provincial governments think it is by teaching them business. Recent evidence suggests that this approach is mistaken. We will produce better managers if we educate them first in traditional subjects in the arts and sciences. We may do best of all if we educate them in Philosophy. Consider the GMAT. Undergraduate business students, whom you think would be especially well prepared for this test, do badly on it, scoring below average for all test takers. The best results are by math students, followed by philosophy students and engineers. According to a book by Michael Useem (1989), [arts and science students] have more difficulty in finding beginning managerial jobs than those with business or professional degrees because they lack specific skills in finance or engineering. When they are hired, it is usually lower in the company hierarchy. Once hired, however, they advance more rapidly than their colleagues.

"An AT&T study showed that, after 20 years with the company, 43 percent of liberal arts graduates had reached upper-middle management, compared with 32 percent of engineers. The Chase Manhattan Bank found that 60 percent of its worst managers had MBAs while 60 percent of its best managers had BAs. At IBM nine of the company's top 13 executives had liberal arts degrees.

"What explains the success of arts and science graduates?

"The study of admission tests found that students do best "who major in a field characterized by formal thought, structural relationships, abstract models, symbolic languages and deductive reasoning." The more abstract a subject, the more it develops pure reasoning skills; the stronger the person's reasoning skills, the better he or she will do in any applied job. This fits the data from business. Corporations report that, though technical skills are most important in low-level managerial jobs, they become less so in middle and top jobs, where the key traits include communication skills, the ability to formulate problems and reasoning." [10]

## Social Entrepreneurs

Calling those who effect social changes as 'social entrepreneurs' U.S., journalist David Bornstein suggests imparting lessons on leadership to all students. He notes:

"Funders seeking to promote the social entrepreneurship option could establish links with high schools, colleges, grassroots groups and journalists to develop 'scouting' systems to identify and nurture potential social entrepreneurs just as society nurtures promising athletes and musicians...Similarly by incorporating examples of social entrepreneurs in school lessons and readings, students could be taught to think about how change occurs and why new ideas encounter political and cultural resistance. Students who have the inclination could be encouraged to start organisations to improve their schools or neighbourhoods or to do internships with community based groups, perhaps, for class credit... At the college and university levels, there are limitless possibilities for incorporating examples or case studies of social entrepreneurs in course work. Beyond focusing on non-profit management techniques the case studies could be useful for under-graduate or graduate courses in medicine, law, engineering, psychology, agriculture, social work, history, political science, economics and so forth. Doctors and nurses could learn about people like Vera Cordeiro, James Grant, and Veronica Khosa who have addressed health problems in creative ways; engineers or agronomists could learn from the experiences of entrepreneurs like Fabio Rosa; psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers could study the work of innovators ...There are enough practical solutions that haven't been documented to keep curriculum developers busy for years." [11]

### The 2005 Scenario

While the classroom is important in its own way, chalk and talk alone would not do for leadership development. Guided social interaction such as a five-day youth leadership programme, got up in Chennai for those from 30 colleges in Tamil Nadu during the last week of January 2005, would help much. [12] Such efforts are laudable. Still caution be exercised in hosting events. Fixing resource persons at random should be avoided; knowledgeable leadership experts should be invited; otherwise the event would be misdirected academic ritual. With the invasion of the electronic media and the internet, interest should be kindled in guided reading habits of students, for, books can never be exactly replaced by other teaching aids even in this click-button age.

**Beyond 2005**

If *leadership* has become the buzzword in management circles in the wake of the third millennium, a mid-2000 study by *Business Week* predicted thus:

> "By 2005, 75 percent of global entrepreneurs will require major overhauls of people management, workplace policies, and workforce planning in response to a shift to knowledge as the centre of wealth production." [13]

In his Foreword to a 1989 title SuperLeadership by Charles C. Manz and Henry P. Sims, Jr. (who came up in 2002 with a future-oriented The New SuperLeadership) corporate chronicler Tom Peters says,

> "In *SuperLeadership,* Charles C. Manz and Henry P. Sims...focus on leaders who lead, not for their own edification and glory, not through command and authority, but through a subtle and ill-understood process that leads others *to lead themselves* to excellence. Indeed, in reading *SuperLeadership*, I recognised many of the characteristics that they articulate in the numerous executives I have encountered in researching my books....The authors do a superb job of articulating specific behaviours and strategies that leaders can use to bring out excellence in others. While philosophy and abstract vision are important executive strengths, the actions that executives take to realise these visions are critical." [14]

To meet future challenges corporate writers who conceptualise leadership and exhort managers to realise them in action adjectivate *leadership* as, '*extra-ordinary leadership*' and '*Super-Leadership*'. The noun matters, not the adjectives.

When organisations cry out for innovative ways of leading people at work, when duties and responsibilities change, the components leadership remain much the same. The duties and responsibilities might vary in tune with the times, not the intrinsic qualities of a leader. That is where the time-tested ancient books of wisdom count.

Writers accept that 'true leadership comes mainly from within a person and not from outside.'[15] It is in this context that the primary sources of this research Tirukkural and *The Mahabharata* deserve consideration.

## Summary of Chapter VIII

# Future Leadership, Literature and the Academia

This Chapter, in two sections, underscores the importance of teaching Literature and Philosophy to all students, including those in the science and technology stream doing professional courses. There is an avid taking for the course PPE – Politics, Philosophy and Economics in the United Kingdom.

For management students Philosophy it is a must, says a Canadian professor. In some companies non-MBA executive fare better than MBAs, because of their liberal arts education, says another Canadian management consultant.

American Management consultants say that William Shakespeare is being taught in executive refresher courses in the U.S. because of the relevance of his plays to the modern management scenario. His plays are prescribed in almost all high schools and colleges. In India, Shakespeare is taught only for English Literature students.

Krishna Chaitanya, an Indian scholar well-versed in Indian and European literary works, pointed out 20 years ago that he was fortunate as a grandson to learn epics and legends from his grandparents in his formative years, which the modern kids are not fortunate to have, because of the changing social conditions. It is pathetic that some young teachers in India are unable to answer simple questions on Mahatma Gandhi.

Even the incumbent executives, writers assay, stand to gain by studying literature. Those works exiled from the course content of general education must be brought back and such works should be taught to all students, without the apparent divisions of science and humanities.

Students pursuing even medical and engineering courses should be taught didactic portions of literature to mould them to meet the challenges of their career later. In this context the primary sources – *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* – deserve attention.

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# Chapter IX

# Summation

The dawn of the third millennium, year 2000, received with much fanfare across the world also ushered in a silent revolution in corporate literature. Serious-minded writers of this segment cracked a paradox that the best way to walk into the future is to carry the light that served the past.

**Into the shelves, into the hearts**

Biographies and autobiographies of war veterans and corporate captains found their way to bookshelves and into the hearts of people. The exponential growth of titles on leadership, some strikingly oriental warranted separate shelves for them. Airport bookstalls, catering mostly to the corporate clientele, display such titles prominently. When Leadership has thus become a buzzword in the corporate domain, it naturally raises the questions:

(i) Do writers and publishers expect leadership could be taught? If yes, how?

(ii) Would the bestsellers that enrich writers/publishers enrich readers?

(iii) How does the society stand to gain by these books on Leadership?

(iv) Is Leadership different from Management? If so, how?

This thesis has attempted to answer the above questions, substantiating that literature could be a potent source to study leadership, as

(i) Leadership could be learnt if not taught; the material to teach needn't be written afresh; there is a mine of lessons in ancient literature.

(ii) Books do help, the recent ones too, especially those that prompt an inward journey; not so much the pulp that provides systems tips.

(iii) If leaders/leader aspirants could learn to be better leaders, by imbibing values and create worthy followers and leaders, the society will gain.

(iv) Leadership is really different from management in that it manages the managers by managing the self. The priority is to self-management.

At the applied realm, the above four factors demand of leader-aspirants:

(i) Initiative for evolution within the family and the academia,

(ii) Cultivating a willingness and curiosity to learn,

(iii) Selective and serious study of value-based books, and

(iv) Leading and developing leaders, to leave the baton on the right hands.

How to meet these demands for evolution as a leader? The process, again, has the following four steps:

(i) Orientation

(ii) Attitude

(iii) Conduct

(iv) Purpose

The first is facilitated by imbibing values in a good family background and direct interaction with wise elders; the second by cultivated study of wisdom books; the third through selflessness and image-consciousness and the fourth with a concern for posterity, a commitment to leave the world better than the leader found it. Leadership is a cultivated growth process and the above four facets are reflected in the four stages of a man's growth, as rightly pointed out by motivator Denis Waitley:

> "The child: *What can you do for me?*
> The adolescent: *I want to do it alone.*
> The adult: *Let us do it together.*
> The leader: *What can I do for you?*" [1]

Adverting to Waitley's four stages of evolution, as above, be it noted that the purpose of teaching/learning leadership is to coax those in stage one to ask, instead of – what can you do for me – Can I do anything? Those in the second stage be prompted to say what those in the third stage do, "Let us do it together." Let those in the third stage say unprompted, what those in the fourth stage say, "What can I do for you?" Then the fourth could tell others: "You do well; keep doing so."

That should be leadership evolution by study. A good family head would strive to move the child to the second stage; elders outside the family circles can elevate those in the second stage to move to the third, with a little bit of motivation those in the third stage can move to the fourth stage. The last move will have to be volitional.

One aspiring to prepare himself/herself for such an evolution shall take note of ten traits that Satish Khanna, an executive who has served the Indian corporate sector, commends – Stay Plugged-in, Visualise Totality, Imagine Possibilities, Student Forever, MPS (**M**ental, **P**hysical and **S**piritual) Strength, Travel Inside, Be Yourself, Love Nature, Always Contribute and Live Life. [2]

All these and much more are taught by both Valluvar and Vyasa.

**The transformation and the portmanteau**

As an individual grows from childhood to adulthood, mankind should also grow. The progress depends upon change in the mind set. It is all a process of continuity; the growth of the individual and the society is interlinked. The transformation, as expected, could be facilitated by a four-fold portmanteau package of lessons on Leadership, as picked up from Valluvar and Vyasa:

1. Family, the orientation field
2. Attitude formation for growth
3. Conduct quotients: Pure mind and self-control
4. Purpose: Mind the next generation

Being a portmanteau, these traits calls for the associated quotients, and together they make one a wholesome leader.

**1. Family, the orientation field**

The authors of the primary literary sources chosen for this research, *Tirukkural* in Tamil and *The Mahabharata* in Sanskrit say in one voice – Leadership starts at home. One has to pick up values of life that would stand him in good stead in his later years from his family background.

That makes it incumbent on the family head to be good himself in every way. Author of *Tirukkural* insists on the following factors regarding the family:

'The father's duty is to project his son as *prima donna* in assemblies.' (67)

'So shall the ward be that people exclaim: how blessed the father!' (70)

'The family's more intelligent progeny is of great benefit to the world.' (68)

These directives enjoin on the leader to live so well as a householder as to help the next generation fare better in the larger interests of the society.

Writer Robin Sharma, who projects visionary leadership, advocates,

"The best leaders recognize leadership is a craft, not a gift." [3]

To Sharma, leadership is a craft; to Valluvar and Vyasa, leadership is the bounden duty at every stage in one's life, not simply a role.

*The Mahabharata* illustrates how leadership's failure at the individual level could affect the institution and the society. King Santanu, great grandfather of the heroes of the epic, failed in his duty as an individual, as a man and as a father. That cost the peace of three generations culminating in a war, killing many. King Santanu fell in love with a fisherwoman, yielded to her condition to crown her progeny, denying his son by the first wife, his legitimate rights to rule the country. Consequently the third generation members did not live in peace and at the end a reluctant heir Yudhishtra is installed and to him all advice is given on what is leadership, ironically by his grandfather Bhishma, a victim of Santanu's failure as a man.

**2. Attitude formation for growth**

Reading and guidance by elders help one cultivate the right attitude. Knowledge is always one's best friend, no matter where he goes and what he does. That is why Valluvar and Vyasa prescribe learning as a continuous process in life. Both the authors say learning is not enough, one should stand up to his learning. Both say the attitude decides the altitude. Valluar says a man could reach heights that his mind conceives, even as flowers of water plants shoot up to the height of the water body.

"Minds rise just as high as lotus to the surface of the water." (Kural - 595)

**3. *Conduct quotients:* Pure mind and self-control**

Both the authors are called sages. But they are not kill-joys. They do not forbid pleasures summarily. They lay the condition that wealth and pleasures be gained by the right means. Both commend, as virtues for leaders, compassion and forbearance. Vyasa tells in *The Mahabharata:*

> "Kindness towards even the children in the womb make thy subjects happy." [4]

Valluvar who proscribes meat eating in the interest of reverence for life, agrees with Vyasa with regard to covetousness. He says the very thought covetousness should be quelled, be it coveting somebody's wealth or wife. Both aver the pure mind matters; that is everything and that will not allow anyone to go astray. Scriptures help one cultivate compassion and pure mind.

**4. Purpose: Mind the next generation**

*Tirukkural* calls for one's growth is within the family fold, followed by learning, listening, seeking the counsel of elders and abiding by it, keeping the mind pure, speaking pleasantly and functioning fair and above board, cherishing forbearance and upholding truth and non-violence. A man evolving into a leader through these traits and objectives, knowing individual's transformation helps society's progress, shall swear within himself, in the words of Robin Sharma:

> "I vowed I would change. My employees deserved a calmer leader. My wife deserved a better husband. My kids deserve a better father. And, I deserved a lot more peace." [5]

Selflessness should start from family and be fostered by academia and the society. When the leadership swerves from its avowed purpose of selfless service toward refined altruism institutions suffer irreparable damages. Hence ideal leadership is placing the society before self. That is what wisdom books all over from *The Mahabharata* to the Bible including *Tirukkural* adumbrate.

Should idealism catch up with leaders of all levels, the progress of the society would be ensured. Not just India, most countries have a lot to teach others with their wisdom books of the past. The natives should learn and teach avid overseas

enthusiasts that there is more material. For the Indians it could be *Tirukkural* and the epic *The Mahabharata* presenting complex characters, trickier situations, more complicated problems in life and sagacious debates and sermons on leadership.

Robin Sharma suggests, reading old books by visiting shops selling used books.

> "How about planning to spend an hour in a used bookstore, just flipping through great books and enjoying some time alone? Books will keep you connected to the fundamental leadership principles that all too often get forgotten in the crush of daily activities." [6]

Sharma is right; one might hit upon old textbooks of moral instruction there. The costly new age illustrated books on epics and classics cater to extra-reading in for wards of affluent parents. The consequences of the exile of 'Moral Instruction' from classrooms calls for a separate research, to take stock as to what the society has missed. That might prompt the academics and the powers that be to revert to the ancient texts, in the interest of the posterity.

Taken that the family has been conducive to the growth of one as a leader, and the academia and the off-campus association helped him with cultivable components of leadership, theoretical quotients stood by him in the rigorous realities of the world, can a leader stop learning? Acclaimed U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt has said:

> "(As) soon as any man ceased to be able to learn, his usefulness as a teacher is at an end. When he himself can't learn, he has reached the stage where other people cannot learn from him." [7]

Roosevelt implies that a leader is obliged to be a student and a teacher; as he has to be a teacher, he should always be a student. Not finding time is no excuse. Holding that continuous reading is self-renewal Robin Sharma uses an effective imagery:

> "Failing to devote time to the discipline of self-renewal is like saying that your are so busy driving that you don't have time to stop for gas." 8

Only continuous learning will help the leader transmit what he has learnt, which is his duty and his obligation to the posterity.

**God to Man**

Of the lack of willingness to learn and transmit ancient knowledge on leadership quotients, no less a personage than Lord Krishna, regrets in the *Gita:*

> "I taught these same eternal truths to Surya (the Sun God)... He passed them on his son Manu, the very earliest man, and he to his son Ikshvaku, who was the first king, so that he could better handle his worldly duties. Handed down in this way through the ages, eminent sages learned these great secrets. But through time, the right type of people became scarce, and the practice of this knowledge dwindled." (*Gita* IV 1,2 & 3)

**Devil to man**

Pitting man against a devil in argument over what is perceived progress Bernard Shaw makes his devil question the man in his *Man and Superman*, "What is your clumsy typewriters, locomotives and the like, which a greedy dog could have invented, if it had wanted money instead of food?" Noted critic A.C.Ward commends,

> "The discussion between The Devil and Don Juan and the others is a serious philosophical argument such as no other dramatist would have dared to write for the stage, since no one but Shaw would have thought it possible to make an audience listen to pure argument so long." [9]

Inventing gadgetry apart, the efforts to develop the right type of leadership would depend on reinventing the man in man and the man in the leader. Help in this direction could be drawn from ancient literature and with the right ensemble the academia should kindle self-motivated study of the values of literature at every stage in one's life. Referring to Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Management consultant Sampat P. Singh says,

> "As books, which prepare individuals to play the leadership's role both have been used successfully at Stanford (Business School) for the courses on leadership. They ought to get high ratings. They are too long; but one has to read the original texts." They mould the man in the leader with right inputs." [10]

**Man to man**

What sort of man makes a leader? India born, India-bred English poet and 1907 Nobel Laureate, Rudyard Kipling, echoing the essence of the *Mahabharata* and *Tirukkural* defines the man in the leader poignantly in his poem *If:* But it is a big 'If."

"If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blame it on you;
If you can trust and yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
...............................................................
If you can dream and not make dreams your master
If you can think and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
...............................................................
If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
...............................................................
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue
Or walk with Kings – nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes not loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much
...............................................................
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run
Yours is the Earth and everything that is in it
And, which is more, you will be a Man my son."

## Academia's additional responsibility

Gratifyingly, this poem of Kipling *If* finds its way to textbooks. The one who reads it in the undergraduate course can get at its meaning, with motivated teaching; he will gain more out of the same poem while pursuing his postgraduate course, even more while entering career or doing research. More and more to understand as the years progress; that is the greatness of what is called value literature or wisdom literature. If the above poem's import sinks into the psyche of the young ones, while being taught with references to leaders of the past and the present, value inculcation in the academia will facilitate social transformation.

The society being a unit of different types of organisations that are integral, leadership should bind them together for a common purpose. Followership begins the day the people sense the leader has the best interests of his people in his mind. As for dynamic and contributing leadership Robin Sharma points out,

> "Leadership is not about popularity, it is about integrity. It is not about power, it is about purpose. And it is not about the title but rather talent." [11]

Here is a dynamic leader, Woodrow Wilson, one of the distinguished Presidents of the United States of America and one of the world leaders as well. He has put in the choicest words what is life and what should the leadership to elevate it. Worth remembering and following are his inspiring words, as cited again by Robin Sharma:

> "You are not here to make merely a living. You are here in order to enable the world to live amply, with great vision, with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world, and you impoverish yourself, if you forget the errand." [12]

For the rising generation to know the mission and the errand, students should be oriented to leadership's values. Academia should offer students of all the branches of study a non-examination package of wisdom literature, as the parents once did.

With regard to value imparting mission for the right type of leadership, this thesis commends ancient texts *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* as gospels and places the academia in the tutoring slot vacated by the home front.

## Cradles of learning

To this end the curriculum developers should update themselves and keep their students in tune with the times. Funds should not be a constraint to strengthen the staff and the library. Sad, but true that this researcher found neither the American Center Library nor the British Council Library in Chennai, supposed to be richer than others, stack even one percent of the latest titles on leadership during the year of publication.

An industrialist friend of this researcher who is a philanthropist and a bibliophile procured over 200 post 2000 AD titles on Leadership and Management. Any new title soon found its way to the scholar. If he were to depend on external libraries, this thesis on the post-2000 AD leadership scenario, covering even the books published in 2005, would not have been completed with such copious contemporary references.

If funds are constraints to educational institutions, bureaucracy bars acquisition of new books then and there in foreign mission libraries. No librarian is empowered to place orders for books by visiting bookshops periodically. Depending upon personal equations with the head of the institution some professors might pick up a few titles occasionally from bookshops and have them added to the library, after reading them!

However most titles, though costly, evoke reprints quickly as individuals, mostly from higher salary strata, buy them. That one has to find a job, get highly paid to buy these books, is a matter of time, past student days. By then, out of sheer experience, one would have picked up lessons on leadership. If the academia were to instil in students leadership traits, better the libraries got equipped with new arrivals. For new titles or reprints of old texts to enter libraries easily and speedily heads of institutions should invoke the largess of captains of industries, who can cover the expenditure under tax shelter. Further, it is an indirect investment for them in HR, as students, ingrained with values of leadership could be of better service to them very soon.

As of now enriching libraries/faculties be entrusted to the charity of the corporate sector, charity being a key leadership component of individuals and institutions. That leadership is warranted to equip students with leadership quotients is the greatness of leadership. As they say in Sanskrit *Dharmo rakshati rakshitah,* it is leadership that fosters leadership. One hopes leaders create leaders from the cradles of learning.

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# Afterword

This study captures the current concepts on Leadership and correlates them with those elucidated in the two ancient Indian works *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata.* Having registered for this project in August 2000, this scholar consulted almost all the important corporate titles on Leadership, nearly 200 published after Jan. 2000. Books published in January and February 2005, just prior to the submission of this thesis, have also been consulted and quoted. Even for the millennia old primary sources the post-2000 A.D publications have been consulted. All these titles form part of the scholar's home library, as he desires to continue to work on this vast and inexhaustible subject - *Leadership and Literature* - albeit submitting this thesis.

This thesis places *Tirukkural* as an epigrammatic expression of the man in the leader, as poet Tiruvalluvar holds the individual as the nucleus of the society. While all the 1330 couplets are relevant, the 250 couplets in the third book Pleasure/Love need not be isolated, as some scholars do. They form the finer sensibilities of leadership. Just for fancying - were he to be asked to cite only one of his couplets that says everything in man-making and leadership, the poet would refer to couplet No: 34. *A pure mind is everything of virtue; all else is nothing.* (34). This thesis interprets the chapter on *Listening* in the corporate context of handling Human Resources.

While *The Mahabharata*, as a whole, could be treated as a management manual, this thesis views it a *Testament of Leadership*, as the epic, through its numerous characters, holds that a good man makes a good leader; leadership is no position or role or title but an obligation and a responsibility. This thesis also establishes, for the first time, that the epic is an elucidation of leadership, from failure to success. King Santanu, enamoured of a fisherwoman, marries her; his son by his first wife gives up his rights to rule. That is the failure of the man in the leader, causing a chain of gruesome events culminating in a war; the wise and righteous great-grandsons of the king come to rule after being exasperated, humiliated and hurt. All that happens in the meanwhile are instances illustrating the facts and facets of leadership.

Together *Tirukkural* and *The Mahabharata* say that the man in the leader matters most. All good men may not be good leaders, but all leaders are obliged to be good men. Bad men can never be good leaders. Man is the measure, to lead and to be led. The world would be drab without men, good men and good leaders. Only good men make good leaders and only good leaders make men good and create fellow leaders.

# Appendices

1. Fifty One-Liners on Leadership from *Tirukkural*
2. Fifty One-Liners on Leadership from *The Mahabharata*
3. Books That Inspired Celebrities
4. Fifty Quotes on Leadership from Three Sources
5. Leadership Styles of 50 Reputed CEOs: Their Advice
6. Fifty Important Post-2000-AD Titles on Leadership
7. Important Titles on Leadership - Categorised
8. Consulted Titles for the Primary Source - *Tirukkural*
9. Consulted Titles for the Primary Source - *The Mahabharata*
10. Works related to the Primary Source - *The Mahabharata*
11. Index to Authors Cited in the Thesis
12. Index to Leaders Referred to in the Thesis

# Appendix 1

## Fifty One-Liners on Leadership from *Tirukkural*

Figures in brackets in the *Kural* section are the serial numbers of the couplets.

1. Erudition is reflected in one's expressions. (28)
2. The fit and the unfit are known by their legacy. (114)
3. The envious never rise up, the unenvious never fall. (170)
4. The strong shine out of hardships as gold out of smithy. (267)
5. What does a tall public image count if the heart is guilty? (272)
6. No agony from those things a man keeps away from. (341)
7. Go into the grains of truth, whatever be the source. (355)
8. May thy ear be fed, before thy stomach. (412)
9. The wise will foresee. The unwise will not. (427)
10. Avarice saps wealth without the slightest vestige. (437)
11. No investment, no profit. No support, no stability. (448)
12. Ponder over before you act; hindsight is disgrace. (467)
13. Overloading even with peacock's feathers break axles. (475)
14. A man's greatness is known by his deeds. (505)
15. The position corrupts even the duly chosen men (514)
16. Affection shall not be a placement preference. (515)
17. Having chosen one for a task, leave him to do it. (517)
18. Forts do not guard cowards, nor riches the unalacritous. (534)
19. Right rule extends the term of governance. (556)
20. Those of etiquette can stomach even poison as nectar. (580)
21. Never buy a spy's words; set another spy to espy him. (588)
22. Only the pro-active possess anything, not the rest. (591)
23. The persevering shall never brood over losses. (593)
24. One with undaunted will is on the trail of wealth. (594)

25. A man's grasp is as high as his mind's reach. (595)
26. Entertain high thoughts. Eschew the rest. (596)
27. Amidst an ambush of arrows, an elephant is stubborn. (597)
28. The world is not for those who lack will power. (598)
29. Size matters little. (599)
30. The languid gain little, even with props of the wealthiest. (606)
31. Misfortune is no disgrace; not exerting is. (618)
32. The persevering shall turn destiny aside. (620)
33. Laugh away distresses. Nothing wins better than daring. (621)
34. The unruffled trouble the troubles. (623)
35. Ability is not planning, but execution. (640)
36. Employ invincible words. (645)
37. Heaping ill-gotten wealth is storing water in unkilned pot. (660)
38. The strong mind gets things done, as willed. (666)
39. Other assets don't count without resoluteness. (670)
40. Hire the one who reads faces, at any cost (703)
41. Strike identity with the audience as you speak. (713)
42. Addressing the unfit is pouring nectar in a dump yard. (720)
43. Nothing is more pernicious than an unrated friendship. (791)
44. Dare the strong, not the weak. (861)
45. Undo enmity at its infancy, as uprooting a briery plant. (879)
46. Even a jot of fault lowers the prestige of the great. (965)
47. Aspiring for glory is light. Not seeking it is blight. (971)
48. Easy accessibility is a mark of courtesy. (991)
49. Those who lack cheers spell darkness even at noon. (999)
50. The shameless destroy everything. (1019)

# Appendix 2

## Fifty One-Liners on Leadership from *The Mahabharata*

Numbers relate to Ganguli's translation of Bhishma's *Raja Niti*; the un-numbered entries relate to *Vidura Niti* and the *Bhagavad Gita,* as edited by the research scholar.

1. Ignorance is the spring of misery. (CLIX – 348)
2. Ignorance has its origin in covetousness. (CLIX – 348)
3. No man indulging in pride would ever be called wise. (XXXVII – 75)
4. Real wisdom is never to be angry at any creature. (CL-CLI – 331)
5. A weak-minded king can never display wisdom. (CXLII – 320)
6. How can happiness be had from despondency? (CLIII- 337)
7. Objects will be won by resolution. (CLIII- 337)
8. Morality is duty and righteousness. (CXX –264)
9. A life of infamy is equal to death. (CXX – 269)
10. Duty must spring from understanding. (CXLII –320)
11. The king should always exert to acquire greatness. (CXXXIII –266)
12. The man of procrastination is lost. (CXXXVII – 291)
13. The kings should never indulge in fruitless disputes. (CXL 12)
14. The king should always honour the foes of his foes. (CXL 311)
15. Good deeds are very rare in those that amass riches. (XXVII 49)
16. The enemy should never be scorned; however, contemptible.
17. Perseverance is the root of prosperity, of gain.
18. Abstain from the companionship with the vile and the low.
19. Do not humiliate and insult others.
20. Avoid sleep, drowsiness, fear, anger, sloth and procrastination.
21. Long are the arms of the intelligent.
22. He who exults not at honours grieves not at slights.
23. Harsh words scorch a man's vital sources.

24. He is a wise person who does not disregard even a weak foe.

25. Never tell any, "I do not believe thee."

26. One should never speak of what one intends to do.

27. A king should observe his duties without wrath or malice.

28. A king who commences with sternness burns the world.

29. Gold is tested by fire; a well-born person by his deportment.

30. To know what to do and not to do, take transformation within.

31. Behaviour is rooted in predominant thoughts and tendencies.

32. You are what you eat, and, you eat, based on what you are.

33. Meditation dissolves sorrow and destroys mental pain.

34. The mind is restless and hard to subdue, but it can be done.

35. Desires never say 'Enough.'

36. Anxiety robs energy.

37. Greed is but desire swollen to grotesque size.

38. Pure thought is more important than refined words and deeds.

39. Purity of action and heart is essential for spiritual growth.

40. Courage, purity, steadfastness and self-control are divine traits.

41. May what you say be pleasant and true.

42. Promoting vanity does not help spiritual growth.

43. Whatever a great man or a woman does, others follow.

44. Both bad and good deeds are the results of human action.

45. Right knowing leads to right doing.

46. Right doing gives rise to right knowing.

47. Anxiety results in far inferior work.

48. Do your work but with full control of your mind and senses.

49. Present truth pleasantly. If you cannot do so, remain silent.

50. What you, others also do.

# Appendix: 3

## Books That Inspired Celebrities

This list is sourced from Gene Landrum's Eight Keys to Greatness, Magna Publishing House, Mumbai (India) 1999

**Maya Angela**

"Crime and punishment changed my life; I act like my hero/shero would act."

**Honore de Balzac**

Coined *mythomania* to describe hero worship of Napoleon and Attila the Hun.

**Napoleon**

Idolised Alexander the Great, Rousseau, and Goethe; carried their books to battle

**Joseph Campbell**

"Reading about Leonardo da Vinci changed my life."

**Agatha Christie**

Influenced by Charles Dickens and Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes.

**Charles Darwin**

Read Malthus for entertainment and it influenced his theories of evolution.

**Fyodor Dostoevsky**

"I read like a fiend" Balzac and the book of Job inspired him to write.

**Isadora Duncan**

"I am indeed the spiritual daughter of Walt Whitman and Aphrodite."

**Thomas Edison**

"I didn't read a few books, I read the library."

**Albert Einstein**

"I had read Kant and Darwin by age twelve."

**Bill Gates**

"My favorite hobby is reading" Leonardo da Vinci held enormous influence.

**Berry Gordy Jr.**

"Joe Louis is my hero. He changed my life. When he became champion, I was 8; the fire started deep inside me to be special." Loved "If" by Kipling.

**Ernest Hemingway**

Read Walpole's Dark Forest at 18; hero inspired enlistment as ambulance driver.

**Adolph Hitler**

Carried Schopenhauer to battle; based on his Master Race thesis on Nietzche's Superman

**Stephen King**

"Lovecraft's books struck me with such force. He opened the way for me. I lived and died with Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. My books are visual movies in my head."

**Karl Marx**

Dedicated his thesis to Prometheus and lived his life in his image in radical revolt.

**James Michener**

"I read 40 volumes of Balzac's Pere Goriot by age 12."

**Mao Tse-tung**

"A hero worshipper who spent six months at age twenty reading about great heroes.

**Maria Montessori**

"I carried books to the theatre, influenced by Seguin, Piaget and Erickson."

**Anne Rice**

"I'm obsessed with Dickens. A Christmas Carol had a profound influence on me."

**Ayn Rand**

Admired Ottoman hero Cyrus, Catherine the Great, Victor Hugo's novels and Aristotle.

**Nikola Tesla**

Reciting Faust during creation of alternating current. "Mark Twain changed my life"

**Mark Twain**

At age 15, Joan of Ark was his hero. "I read Kipling's Kim every year."

**Ted Turner**

Alexander the Great, Attila the Hun, Gandhi and General George Patton.

**Frank L Wright**

Aladdin and His Magic Lamp story; taught he was Welsh God Taliesin.

# Appendix: 4

## Select Quotes on Leadership from Three Sources

**Source I Conceptual – General books**

The following quotes from *The Forbes Book of Business Quotations,* [1] *The Penguin Book of Business Wisdom* [2] and *Leadership,* compiled by Ajanta Chakravarty, (Rupa &Co) [3] define leadership. (Comments of the researcher are *provided within brackets)*

1. Leadership is the initiation and direction of an endeavour in pursuit of consequence. *(Leadership is action – no sermon)* **Royal Alcott**

2. Leadership involves remembering past mistakes, an analysis of today's achievements, an a well-grounded imagination in visualising the problem of future. *(Leadership is vision sustained by the rigours of reality.)* **Stanley C. Allyn**

3. A leader of men must take decisions quickly; be independent; act and stand firm; be a fighter; speak openly, plainly, frankly; makes defeats his lessons; co-operate, co-ordinate; use the best of any alliances or allies; walk with active faith courageously toward danger or the unknown; create a staff; know, love and respect the best interests of his followers; be loyal; true; frank and faithful; reward loyalty; have a high, intelligent and worthy purpose and ideal. Do justice, love, mercy; fear no man, but fear God only. **John W. Dodge**

(**Note**: *decisions quickly, independent, act, speak openly, faith, courage, alliances, know, love, respect, intelligent, and purpose.)*

4. A chief is a man who assumes responsibility. He says "I was wrong, not my people were wrong." **Antoine de Saint Exupery**

5. The man who is worthy of being a leader of men will never complain about the stupidity of his helpers, the ingratitude of mankind, nor the inappreciation of the public. These are all parts of the great game of life. To meet them and overcome them and not go down before them in disgust, discouragement or defeat - that is the proof of power. **William J. H. Boetcker**

6. Leadership is an experience of power which may blind the victor to the march of history. *(Power tends to blind; being awake is important.)* **Ferdinand Braudel**

7. You will never be a leader, unless you first learn to follow and be led. **Tiorio**

8. Real leaders are ordinary people with extra-ordinary determination.

*(The man-leader syndrome is reassured.)* **John Seaman Garns**

9. Reason and judgment are the qualities of a leader. **Tacitus**

10. To keep at the top is almost harder than to get there. There is no office-hours for leaders. *(Note: no office-hours for leaders.)* **Cardinal Gibbons**

11. Those men who command themselves command others. **William Hazzlit**

*(Self-control is a norm for leadership.)*

12. The character and qualifications of the leader are reflected in the men he selects, develops. To have loyal, efficient employees, be a loyal, efficient employer. *(As the leader, so the followers)* **Arthur W. Newcomb**

13. He who has never learned to obey cannot be a good commander. **Aristotle**

14. True leadership is all about example. - **Bob Ashford**

*(The leader shall set an example for modesty and obedience.)*

15. Leadership is a state of mind – what you do to yourself, not what you do to others.

**Chin Ning Chu**

16. Management is doing things right and leadership, doing the right things.

*(Note the difference between Manager and Leader.)* **Peter Drucker & Warren Bennis**

17. Management is mostly about 'to do' lists. Leadership is about tapping the well-springs of human motivation, about the fundamental relations with one's fellows.

**Tom Peters**

18. You don't manage people; you manage things. You *lead* people. **Grace Hopper**

19. When they were at their personal best, the leaders we studied were able to challenge the process, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, model the way and encourage the heart. **James M. Kouzes & Barry Z. Posner**

20. Yesterday leaders commanded and controlled. Today leaders empower and coach.

**Denis Waitley**

21. Because of unprecedented demands on today's leaders, a new kind of leader is emerging. Leaders must possess all of the qualities that historically have resulted in change and progress and yet much more: not only vision, creativity, and skill at communication, but also courage, empathy, and the flexibility to lead successfully through wholly uncharted and rapidly changing and often treacherous terrain.

(*Leaders Talk Leadership*, P. 5) **Meredith D. Ashby, Stephen A. Miles**

**Source 2 Observational - Books on Leadership**

22. There is, of course, a crucial distinction between management and leadership...A frequent lament is that many organisations are over-managed and under-led. The story of business is the story of great leaders. While the technology of management is highly developed our understanding of leadership is more fuzzy. Leadership is not so much about what you do, but how you do it. **Gary Hamel**

(*The Ultimate Business Library,* P. xii)

23. Since leaders deal with people, not things, leadership without values, commitment and conviction can only be inhumane and harmful. **Warren Bennis**

(*On Becoming A Leader,* P. 163)

24. An American said to Carter: "You are managing a nation Mr. President, but you are not giving us leadership. There is great deal of difference between the two. A President needs to do both." (*In Search of Leadership,* P. 42) **Russi M. Lala**

25. The communication skill is no less important; the skill of listening - listening empathetically to the voices of the community. **Robert J. Allio**

(*Leadership: Myths and Realities,* P. 193)

26. Enabling your associates to work at their very best is at the core of managerial leadership. (*Managerial Leadership* P. 79 ) **Peter Topping**

27. He who overcomes others is powerful; he who overcomes himself is strong .

(*Not Bosses but Leaders,* P. 175) **John Adair**

28. One of the best hearing aids a man can have is an attentive wife.

(*Rules and Tools for Leaders,* P.143) **Groucho Marx** cited by **Perry M. Smith**

29. Poor judgment of people is often the Achilles heel of an otherwise successful leader. (*Inspiring Leadership*, P. 29) **John Adair**

30. The leader's role is to provide direction through modelling and vision, to motivate through love and inspiration, to build a complementary team based on mutual respect, to be effectiveness minded and focused on results rather than on methods, systems and procedures. (*Principle centered Leadership, P.* 134) **Stephen Covey**

31. Leadership is not a matter of command and control. It is the evocation and alignment of Spirit. - (*The Spirit of Leadership,* P. 61) **Harrison Owen**

32. I believe there are five key steps to developing "Leadership from Within": 1. Know yourself 2. Have vision and passion 3. Take risks. 4. Communicate effectively 5. Check progress and results. (*Leadership From Within,* P. 23) **Peter Urs Bender**

**Source 3: Empirical - What Leaders Say On Leadership**

33. The ability to concentrate and to use your time well is everything if you want to succeed in business – or almost anywhere else for that matter. **Lee Iacocca**

(Autobiography, P.20)

34. Your position does not give you the right to command. It imposes on you the duty of living so that others can receive your commands without being humiliated. *(Note what is not leadership)* **Dag Hammerskjold**

35. I must follow people Am I not their leader? **Benjamin Disraeli**

*(That a leader is a follower is one vital aspect of leadership.)*

36. You do not lead by hitting people over the head – that is assault, not leadership.

**Dwight D. Eisenhower**

37. People ask the difference between a leader and a boss. The leader works in the open and the boss in covert. The leader leads and the boss drives. **Theodore Roosevelt**

*(Note difference between leader and manager.)*

38. If you want me you can always find me in the lead tank. **General Patton**

39. Now I have got to be leader of leaders. **Steve Ballmer**

(*High Tech Titans- E. Brown*, P. 14)

40. I am a true traditionalist, it is the area of communicating; the essence of communicating never changes. The goals remain the same: to introduce, instruct, persuade or assert authority. From yesterday's handwritten notes to today's e-mail the architecture of effective communication remains the same. * Know your subject * Know your audience * Know your medium * Given the choice be brief rather than wordy * Keep in mind the difference between a forceful and belligerent tone * Trust the power of a carefully chosen word * Never forget how you would like people to communicate with you. *(Communicating* P. 7*)* **Mark H. McCormack**

41. The final test of the leader is that he leaves behind, in other men, the conviction and the will to carry on. *(Leadership should ensure continuum)* **Walter Lippman**

42. Leadership is the very heart and soul of management. No one really manages a business by shifting the numbers or re-arranging organisational charts or applying the latest business school formulas. What you manage in business is people.

(*Managing*, P. 133) **Harold Geneen**

43. I have concentrated all along on building the finest retailing company that possibly we could. Period. Creating a huge personal fortune was never particularly a goal of mine. (*Built to Last*, James C. Collins & Jerry I Porras, P. 22) **Sam Walton**

44. Our old style of familial company was unusual or rare in the United States, although Tom Watson Sr. built IBM into an industrial giant by using some of the same people oriented policies we use. (*Made in Japan*, P. 163) **Akio Morita**

45. It is not easy to say why one management is successful and another is not. The causes of success or failure are deep and complex, and chance plays a part. Experience has convinced me, however, that for those who are responsible for a business, two important factors are motivation and opportunity. **Alfred P. Sloan, Jr.,**

(*My Years with General Motors*, P: 429)

**46.** Researchers have classified three types of behaviour. The first group, termed gamblers, took high risks but exerted no influence on the outcome of events. The second group, termed conservatives, took very little risk. The third group, termed achievers, had to test the limits of what they could do, and with no prompting demonstrated the point of the experiment...The point is that both competence and

achievement-oriented people spontaneously try to test the outer limits of their abilities. (High *Output Management*, P: 165) **Andrew S. Grove**

47. John Keegan, a British military historian believes that great battle- field commanders such as Alexander the Great and Napoleon possessed five essential attributes of leadership: 1. They show the troops they care 2. They tell the troops exactly what they want 3. They convince the troops, they will be rewarded if they fight, punished if they don't. 4. They know when to attack. 5. They share their troops' danger. At the risk of making business sound too much like warfare, I think Keegan has a point for any manager who aspires to be a leader. **Mark McCormack**

(*Success Secretes*, P : 159)

48. In my capacity as President or Board Chairman, I have had to use strong words on occasions in reprimanding people or staff for failures or blunders. But I have never thought myself superior to them in intelligence or knowledge... A genuine sense of humility...will give huge dividends, both tangible and intangible.

*Not for Bread Alone,* P: 32 **Konosuki Matsushita**

49. Any damn fool can do it when things are going well. But how do you stay with it and keep things right when you are in trouble?... I have seen fellows who look like greatest guys in the world and yet when the crunch comes, they fold.

*former Chairman of Du Pont.,* **Irving Shapiro**

(quoted by **Mark Potts & Peter Behr** *The Leading Edge* P. 200-201)

50. Throughout my life, the bottom line I have worried about most was that my kids turn out all right. The only rock that stays steady, the only institution I know that works is the family. I was brought up to believe in it – and I do. Because I think a civilised world can't remain civilised for long, if its foundation is built on anything but family. A city, a state or a country can't be any more than the sum of its vital parts – millions of family units. You can't have a country or a city or a state that is worth a damn unless you govern within yourself in your day-to-day life. It all starts at home. (*Talking Straight*, P. 18) **Lee Iacocca**

# Appendix - 5

## Leadership Styles of 50 Reputed CEOs: Their Advice

How 50 corporate chiefs in U.S function and what do they advice.

**Thomas J. Neff**, Chairman, Spencer Stuart, U.S. based executive search company and **James M. Citrin**, a communications professional and Managing Director, Spencer Stuart, have projected 50 CEOs as successful leaders in their book **Lessons from the Top** (subtitled - *The 50 Most Successful Business Leaders in America and What You Can Learn from Them)* One can gain an idea on the practical bearings of leadership. Management consultant **Peter Drucker**, prolific author, whose business is helping business, is chosen as the 51st leader. The following are the CEOs. They are introduced with their leadership traits and their advice to the corporate sector.

**1.** Telecom major AT&T's **Mike Armstrong** calls for courage, vision or strategy, which should be real and substantive. One should have the guts to make decisions. His advice: You have to commit to values as you generate personal and organisational energy. You have to create excitement as well as opportunity.

**2.** Autodesk's CEO **Carol Bartz** believes that leadership starts where one is excited about a vision. She insists that one should have passion and the surest way to the top is to have a strong and a broad base of experience. Her advice: People should build their career like a pyramid, not like a ladder. Pyramids have a stronger base.

3. "If you can't pour your heart into what you say, how do you expect others to be passionate?" asks **Hans Becherer** of Deere who places faith in integrity, trust, customer focus, superior goods and concern for employees with their communities. His advice: Be passionate in what you do. A company responds to the passion and infectious enthusiasm of leaders.

4. **Cordon Bethune** of Continental Airlines feels that failures are of human origin. He holds that the leader should recognise and appreciate the employees. His advice: If treated like ciphers, they will let down the boss. Better talk straight to people and take their help. Don't beat the horse to run faster. Sometimes he actually accelerates if you stop whipping him.

**5.** Brains are not everything, asserts **Larry Bossidy** of Allied-Signal. To him leadership is a vision. He calls for courage, communication and leading without panicking. His advice: The more you search, the more you recognise reasons to be humble, as there is an awful lot to do all the time.

**6. Jim Broadhead** of the FPL Group is terse. Says he, "A strategy is nothing but a piece of paper unless you put it into action." His advice: The person in charge not only has to know what is to be done; he has to get the results. He has to execute. What separates winners from losers is execution.

**7. Steve Case** of America Online was involved in every decision. But soon he delegated things to attend to what really demanded his attention. His advice: Passion is as important as intellect. Realise that the only way you are going to create a significant company is to make your role into one to guiding things as opposed to doing things.

**8**. "Customer satisfaction is the most important measure. We measure it in every way," says **John Chambers** of Cisco Systems. A visionary, he adopted a reward system to his employees to ensure customer satisfaction. His advice: Stay focused; draw on all the resources around you. You can accomplish almost anything, as long as you are willing to work.

**9. Michael Dell** of Dell Computer became the youngest CEO of a *Fortune* 500 company at 27. Dell is quick in communication and prompt in his response. Precise, direct and cost-conscious, he is customer-oriented. His advice: Innovate. Fix priorities.

**10**. Alive and responsive to changes **Elizabeth Dole** of American Red Cross managed her inner resources making the organisation move faster. She was passionate and effectively communicated her vision. Her advice: You may be the most dedicated person in the world, and have tremendous skills, but if you can't communicate what you are trying to achieve, your organisation is not going to go anywhere.

11. **Bob Eaton** of DaimlerChrysler understood the difference between managing and leading. He organised teams accommodating all disciplines and eliminated the top management's involvement in day-to-day affairs. His advice: Focus on vision and beliefs and values to inspire people.

12. **Bernie Ebbers** of MCI WorldCom dealt with people on a person-to-person basis, not on title-to-title. He never had a casual relationship with his employees. He tried to participate in their life as people, not simply as employees. His advice: If you can walk with people, you will find that much less resistance than in a dictated manner.

13. **Michael Eisner** of Walt Disney has proved that creativity determines success. A creative person comes up with interesting products, regardless of the industry. His advice: What gets measured gets done. What matters is the right perspective.

14. **Don Fisher** of The Gap recognised those who walked along with him; he paid credit to where it was due. His advice: Common sense is something you won't get in business schools. Before realising the need to change things, you have to understand the culture.

15. With his motto, 'decentralise the company; let people be responsible for their jobs,' **Don Fites** of Caterpillar restructured the company when it was perceived impossible. He leads commendably by example. His advice: Leading by example is demonstrating and rewarding those who perform; not those who do not perform.

16. With his focus on future **Bill Gates** of Microsoft approaches the job with intensity. Doing his homework so thoroughly, he has set high standards that his employees desperately tried to emulate. To his personnel, he is a role model, revered and followed. His advice: If you enjoy your job, you will never burn out. Better to have a long time horizon for research.

17. **Lou Gerstner** of IBM reconnected his company with market place and its customers. He built better products and delivered them faster. Totally customer-focused, he energised the talented people waiting for leadership. His advice: Be intense, competitive, focused, blunt and tough. Have no complacency; if you believe the job is finished you will run into trouble.

**18**. Working for 'a higher purpose' **Ray Gilmartin** of Merck is people-oriented. Cost-conscious, he gives the value for money. His advice: Know and develop yourself; your business; develop and support your people and communicate; that part of leadership principle is often the hardest.

**19**. Realising that the people at the top should set an example as to how to run a business, **Ace Greenberg** of Bear Stearns hired poor but smart people who desired to grow rich. He made them work hard and stick to ethics. His advice: Be courteous to customers. Watch expenses when times are good. Ignore what everyone is doing. Do what you think is right.

**20**. With his hands-on approach **Hank Greenberg** of **AIG** wishes to build leaders, not a bunch of clerks. He delegates work and encourages branch heads to market aggressively. His advice: What you do with what is given makes all the difference.

**21. Andy Grove** of Intel enriched his employees through training. He prioritised the areas for improvement. His advice: Insufficiently trained employees are inefficient since they do not know the best way of doing things.

**22**. Setting his goals and communicating them effectively, **Charles Heimbold** of Bristol-Myers Squibb set his employees focused on future. He gave them responsibility, resources and stressed on the accountability factor. His advice: Be ambitious, be goal-focused. Experience is invaluable.

**23.** Taking the value code for family and business the same **Martha Ingram** of Ingram Industries encouraged one to one relationship. She installed a toll-free line that rang only in her office for employees to discuss problems directly. Her advice: Be ready to change directions, if you need to. Above all, worry about your customers. They can go away in a drop of a hat.

**24.** A vigilant **David Johnson** of Campbell Soup motivated the staff, tuned them to be self-reliant and alive to the competition to out-perform the targets. His advice: Be prepared to take risks. Tough goals that stretch you on, prompt you to succeed; the feeling thereof is unbelievable because of the accomplishment potential.

**25. Herb Kelleher** of Southwest Airlines holds leadership is servant-hood. he prefers leadership by example. He believes in adaptability and demonstration of sincerity, which should come from the heart rather than the head. His advice: Success is never final; keep earning it over and again. You have to avoid complacency, cockiness and arrogance.

**26.** Committed to quality products, customer care, trust and consistency **Bill Kerr** of Meredith makes his people eager to work. He is focused. He would not sacrifice company's values for short-term financial objectives. His advice: Keep improving on what is currently doing well. That will help you not only maintain, but also help grow the trust customers have on you.

**27.** With his shrewd sense of urgency and the ability to manage priorities **Chuck Knight** of Emerson Electric takes a methodical approach. He plans and controls everything. He collects details, understands them and takes decisions. His advice: Not the guy with the most resources but the guy who utilises his resources best wins.

**28. Dennis Kozlowski** of Tyco International believes that pay for performance works well. He says, "I am not looking over our employees' shoulders and neither anyone else here." He finds the best of people and leaves them on their own exhorting them that the more the managers earn for the shareholders, the more they earn for themselves. His advice: Stay focused. Be ruthless about discipline. One individual can make a difference.

**29. Ralph Larsen** of Johnson & Johnson defines that a company's first responsibility is to its customers. His track records are tremendous in decentralisation. To sensitise to the current trends and future scope, he avoids duplication in processes. His advice: Compensation is the least expensive thing for good people. It is the most expensive one for mediocre people.

**30. Ken Lay** of Enron believes that everybody in an organisation could contribute. He insists on the value system and the importance of individuals. He works hard and facilitates individual's communication within peer groups and up and down the

organisation. His advice: Your job as CEO is to provide leadership and part of that is having a vision to really energise everybody.

**31.** With planning and execution as her mission **Shelly Lazarus** of Ogilvy & Mather has all-encompassing brand experience. She holds her people accountable. She demonstrates her inherent respect to the clients. Her advice: Don't stay in something where you find it a little dreary. The people who are most successful are those who love what they do and are quite passionate about it.

**32. Bill Marriott** of Marriott International, influenced by his father, attends to details in the hospitality industry. He cares for quality, cleanliness and customers. He believes that if he cares his employees, they, in turn, would take care of his guests. His advice: Energy, integrity, honesty and caring for employees ensure profits and success. Energy is probably the most important quotient in a CEO.

**33. Lou Noto** of Exxon Mobil Corporation takes alliances as part of the business strategy in the oil industry. He has streamlined employee deployment. He adopts the best practices of one division in the other. His advice: You have to learn to listen to customers and react quickly. Revolutionalise your business with customer feedback.

**34**. Not fascinated with his own views **Paul O'Neill** of Alcoa learnt new things and developed adaptability. With a concern for people he says, "The test is how you connect with people. A company must live by its values." His advice: The bigger you are, don't become bureaucratic with layers of decision making.

**35.** Apart from aggressive expansion **John Pepper** of Procter & Gamble streamlined P&G's structure; changed its culture; promoted speed and risk taking. His advice: Life is a series of coincidences. You have to be careful not to lose balance by being a victim of your own attributes.

**36.** A very good communicator **Frank Raines** of Fannie Mae can influence his audience over the processes of decision-making, directly or indirectly. He expects leaders to clarify their mission internally and communicate their objectives to the rest of the world. His advice: Focus and communicate. If your interests are spread all over the place, your competitors will beat you.

**37. Howard Schultz** of Starbucks puts employees first to get the greatest shareholder returns. He states, "In today's world you have got to be close to your people. We feel we are closer to our people, more than we have ever been before." His advice: You won't be able to attract and retain great people if they don't feel like they are part of you. Therefore, to inspire customers, inspire your own people.

**38.** Passionate, goal-focused, good at perfect timing, and delegating authority, CEO **Charles Schwab** of Charles Schwab aligns company's goals with client's goals. His advice: Successful CEOs have been incredibly passionate. Without that quality, one cannot possibly be a leader.

**39.** As a leader, **Walter Shipley** of Chase Manhattan is a facilitator. He provides strategy, motivation and direction. He creates environment that enables people to rise beyond their individual capabilities. His advice: If people feel valued you will have a stronger company. Demonstrate the ability to make judgements.

**40. Fred Smith** of Federal Express is a role model leader. He has executed his plans thoroughly, using information and technology better than his competitors. His advice: Have courage, not to cave in. Business is fun. Enjoy what you are doing. Think what you do is important to people.

**41. Bill Steere** of Pfizer focussed on research. He feels the core value of his business is customer focus and the CEO should manage people's strengths. If he understands the weaknesses of others, he can reassign them suitably. His advice: Everybody has got weaknesses; a focus on weaknesses of others would make you unhappy. Rather, focus on people's strengths.

**42. Bob Tillman** of Lowe's Companies has understood the customers, genderwise and sectorwise; listened to them and modified his business. When retailers fail, it is because of their own personal arrogance His advice: The CEO's should remember that customers are far smarter than themselves.

**43.Alex Trotman** of Ford Motor Company pins his faith on passion, skill, knowing people and establishing trust. He says, "In personnel management it is not moving people around for the sake of moving around. It is to help them gain the knowledge

that they will need to be able to lead as they get higher and higher in the company." His advice: Get rid of those you do not trust; you can't sit around for years waiting until 'X' retires.

**44.** To **Dan Tully** of Merryll Lynch the attitude is important. He understood the focus of the company and held the client's interest foremost. He was willing to adapt, innovate and change. His advice: Two biggest problems impeding the growth of companies are complacency and arrogance.

**45.** Swearing that he should build on the strengths of the past **David Komansky** of Merryll Lynch excelled in sales; he so expanded business that Merryll Lynch became the largest single securities firm. His advice: You must give people the flexibility to make their own decisions and grow.

**46.** Being serious about business and serious about people **Mike Volkema** of Herman Miller chose to follow and not lead for some time. Then he realised that leadership was the way that one needed to go on his own. His advice: Invariably the mistakes to look back with regret are situations played too safe.

**47. Charles Wang** of Computer Associates bridged the gap between technology companies and business clients. He got guided by a moral compass and took his directions. His advice: Success is not a destination, but the right direction.

**48.** Generous to human foibles **Sandy Weill** of Citigroup says, "If people make a mistake that is not the end of the world. The end of the world is making a mistake and hiding it." His advice: First, execute; then, pay everyone like a partner, third, rely on better people to help you succeed.

**49. Jack Welch** of General Electric insists quality mindset in everything. He cracks a paradox: "We reward failure. You have to do it. Because otherwise people will be afraid to try things." His advice: De-layer the company; make it smaller and go faster.

**50.** With his motto - expand and flourish - **Al Zeien** commends three **P**'s – people, product and purpose. This is explaining to people plainly all the whys - why do we have to close a plant, why should we do this, or that. His advice: Concentrate on the core business.

# Appendix 6

## Fifty Important Post-2000-AD Titles on Leadership

(This list is indicative, not exhaustive; more titles follow in the categorized Appendix)

**1. Leadership: Myths and Realities**

*Robert J. Allio New Delhi, Tata McGraw Hill 2000 Pages: 237*

Drawing much from the past and present works, this informative work in lucid style defines and anlyses leadership. It also lists leadership qualities and skills.

**2. The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader**

*John C. Maxwell Nashville, Thomas Nelson 2000, Pages: 156*

"Gets straight to the heart of leadership issues," says Ken Blanchard. "His principles on effectively leading others have impacted my life and business," admits Peter Lowe.

**3. The Leader**

*Normand L. Frigon Sr., Harry Jacson Jr Mumbai, Magna 2000, Pages: 167*

Something of an exercise book, a format cannot be under-rated, this helps students and administers with self-evaluation tests. Many would benefit thereby.

**4. The Future Manager**

*Satish Khanna, Tata McGraw Hill, New Delhi, 2000 Pages: 178*

Justifying its subtitle- A value Builder for Tomorrow's Organisation - this book calls for the best use of the human capital by providing guidance to one's inward growth.

**5. Wisdom Of the CEO**

*Dauphinais, William Grady Means, Colin Price John Wiley, New York 2000 Pages: 372*

Amply justifies its subtitle 29 Global Leaders Tackle Today's Most Pressing Business Challenges. Its wide range covers numerous industries, technologies and perspectives.

**6. Powerful Women** *Dancing on the Glass Ceiling*

*Sam Parkhouse Chichester, John Wiley 2001 Pages: 240*

On the women entrepreneurs in U.K. this book explains how they made their way to the top, their contribution to the business world and their traits that could be followed.

**7. The Heart of a Leader**

*Kenneth Blanchard Suerry, Eagle 2001, Pages: 160*

Subtitled '*Insights on the Art of Influence*' this book cries for readers' attention with a bold typeface quote on left-side page and its explanation on the opposite page.

**8. Unleashing Leaders**

*Hilarie Owen* *John Wiley, Chichester* *2001, Pages: 170*

Makes a very interesting reading. Alive to the current trends, the author has conviction in culling out lessons from books of the past and learning from history.

**9. Leadership: Magic, Myth or Method**

*J.W. McLean & William Weitzel* *Magna, Mumbai,* *2001, Pages: 249*

Taking actual business life situations and written in a reader-friendly style, this is more useful to managers in the corporate sector who want to grow as leaders.

**10. Theodore Roosevelt on Leadership**

James M. Strock *New York, Forum* *2001, Pages: 277*

Reflecting the views of Theodore Roosevelt, an awesome President of the U.S., this book presents a ringside view of political and social leadership.

**11. The Leadership Engine**

*Noel Tichy* *New York, Harper* *2002, Pages: 452*

Combining concepts with the demands, this research, couched in the story format, engages the attention of readers and inspires those crave to know on leadership.

**12. Leaders Talk Leadership**

*Edited by Meredith D. Ashby & Stephen A Miles* New York, OUP, *2002, Pages 257*

This book, edited by business analysts, provides a ringside view of leadership under five divisions with essays by 51 practitioners, touching key result areas.

**13. The Cycle of Leadership**

*Noel Tichy* *New York, Harper* *2002, Pages: 435*

Believing that leadership can be taught, the practitioner- author lays a motorable road-map, justifying the subtitle - *How great leaders teach their companies to win.*

**14. The New Leaders**

*Daniel Goleman, and others* *London, Little, Browne* *2002, Pages: 302*

Presenting six leadership styles, the authors with their motto that *concepts must pay in results*, have attempted to analyse leadership quotients scientifically.

**15. The New Super Leadership**

*Charles C. Manz & Henry P. Sims Jr. New Delhi, Viva 2002, Pages: 256*

With specific guidance, the book offers paradigms suited to the times. Authors say the best leaders move ahead, maximise their contribution and that of others.

**16. Business Gurus Speak**

*S. N. Chary New Delhi, Macmillan 2002 Pages: 220*

Seven Indian business leaders including the old guard Verghese Kurien of dairying and the younger generation's Mukesh Ambani are profiled and interviewed.

**17. The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make**

*Hanz Finzel Om Headlines, Secunderabad 2003 Pages 200*

The ten: top-down attitude, dirty delegation, paperwork above people, communication chaos, absence of affirmation, missing culture clues, no room for mavericks, success without successors, dictatorship in decision making, failure to focus on the future.

**18. Value Shift**

*Lyn Sharp Paine New Delhi, Tata 2003, Pages: 302*

The book has 9 chapters. The subtitle reveals the focus – Why should companies merge social and financial imperatives to achieve superior performance?

**19. An Invented Life: Reflection on Leadership and Change**

*Warren Bennis Mumbai, Magna 2003, Pages: 235*

All the 17 chapters relate to various aspects of leadership. Chapter 5, 'The Four Competencies of Leadership' makes an interesting reading.

**20. The 7 Heavenly Virtues of Leadership**

*Carolyn Barker & Robyn Coy (Ed.) New Delhi, Tata 2003, Pages: 213*

Contains articles by scholars of Australian Institute of Management on seven traits of leadership: Humility, Courage, Integrity, Compassion, Humour, Passion and Wisdom.

**21 The Trusted Leader**

*Robert Galford, Anne Seibold New York, The Free Press 2003, Pages: 271*

The book provides an in-depth analysis on Trust, a key component of leadership – justifying its subtitle, 'Bringing out the best in your people and your company.'

**22. The Leadership Spectrum**

*Mary Burner Lippitt* *Mumbai, Magna* *2003, Pages: 197*

This presents leaders as inventors, catalysts, developers, performers, protectors and challengers, as those working in the six business priority areas.

**23. Inspiring Leadership**

*John Adair* *New Delhi, Viva Books* *2003, Pages: 366*

With its kicker, 'Learning from Great Leaders,' reverting to history and literature this attempts to orient contemporary leaders to the world of idealism of the past.

**24. Leadership and the One Minute Manager**

*Kenneth Blanchard, Patricia Zigarmi, Drea Zigarmi* *Harper* *2003, Pages : 112*

This persuasive, cute, reader-friendly book is like semi-processed food for instant in-take and could be read twice to retain the message and to function accordingly.

**25. On Becoming a Leader**

*Warren Bennis* *Mumbai, Magna* *2003, Pages: 226*

Traversing back and forth the past and present, this book is rich in material. Those using pen while reading will be liberal with their ink on the margins of the book.

**26. Leaders who changed the world**

*James Mac Gregor Burns, New Delhi* *Penguin, Viking* *2003, Pages: 319*

An oft-quoted author on leadership, he presents here personalities like Mahatma Gandhi as the leaders who changed contemporary thought and activities.

**27. Not Bosses but Leaders**

*John Adair with Peter Read* *New Delhi, Kogen Page* *2003, Pages: 186*

Reader-friendly, this is 'an authoritative and wise guide to leaders. 'Practicing leaders can benefit from this readable book,' in the words of Ken Blanchard.

**28. Leading: Lessons from Literature**

*Sampat P Singh* *New Delhi, Response* *2003, Pages: 213*

With examples and anecdotes, the author approaches leadership through a multi-disciplinary perspective and establishes that it could be taught through literature.

### 29. Lateral Leadership

*Rozer Fisher & Allen Sharp London, Profile Books 2003, Pages: 219*

The book discusses leadership under five heads: Purpose, Thinking, Learning, Engagement and Feedback and concludes with application aspects.

### 30. Developing Leaders, Teams and Organisations

*Anup J Singh, Daisy Chauhan New Delhi, Excel 2003, Pages: 388*

The strength of this book is presenting real life situations of Leadership, analysing the subject under Development, Empowerment, Team and Organisation building.

### 31. How Did They Manage? Leadership Success from History

*Daniel Diehl, Mark P. Donnelly Penguin, Viking, 2003, Pages: 204*

With history as a potent source to learn leadership, Religious leaders, philosophers, kings, despots, pirates, prophets, statesmen and industrialists are cited here.

### 32. The Eleven Keys to Leadership

*Dayle M. Smith New Delhi, Tata 2003, Pages: 183*

The author presents leadership writing on control, relation-ship, encouragement, in an impressive way and evokes an interest to learn more on the subject.

### 33. The Ethics of Leadership

*Joanne B. Ciulla,* Singapore, Thomson Learning *2003, Pages: 276*

Leadership is discussed under power, self-interest, virtue, private morality, duties followers, the greatest good, moral and emotional leadership and culture.

### 34. Patton on Leadership

*Alan Axelrod New Delhi, Viva Books 2003, Pages: 279*

General Patton's views are presented without military clichés. The lessons, clear and pointed, are meant for anyone who is interested in leading himself and others.

### 35. Inspiring leadership

*J. C Ward, Andrea, others Singapore, Thomson Learning 2003, Pages: 438*

The subtitle - *Staying afloat in turbulent times* - clearly tells what to look for; the authors define the crucial role of emotional intelligence in a competitive world.

**36. Extraordinary Leadership**

*Peter J. Reed London Kogan Page,* *2003, Pages: 195*

Outlining social and the corporate needs, the author explains how extraordinary leadership can turn vision into strategic thinking and coordinated action.

**37. What Would Buddha Do at Work?**

*Metcalf Franz & BJ Callagher Hately* New Delhi, Tata *2003 Pages: 174*

Pithy thought-provoking articles on 101quotes from Buddhist texts and associated business thoughts and Ken Blanchard's Foreword make an interesting reading.

**38. Servant Leadership**

*Robert Greenleaf* *Magna, Mumbai* *2003 Pages 368*

As one connected with corporate sector and the academia, the author had developed and specialised this aspect of leadership - servanthood.Inspires one to be very modest.

**39. ...And Dignity for All** Unlocking Greatness with Values-based Leadership

*James Despain – Jane Bodman Converse Pearson Education Delhi 2003 Pages: 198*

Author Despain joined as a sweeper and became Vice-President of an earthmoving equipment company. A pragmatic guide to leadership fostering human relations.

**40. Rethinking the Future**

*Ed. Rowan Gibson,* *Nicholas Brealey, London* *2003 Pages: 276*

A collection of articles by experts on Leadership. Writers include John Kotter, Philip Kotter, Warren Bennis, Peter Senge , Kevin Kelly, C.K. Prahalad and others.

**41. The Pursuit of Excellence**

*M.V. Kamath* *New Delhi, Rupa 2003 Pages 88*

Celebrity journalist. scholar and indologist provides native moorings to excellence, which includes courage and self-knowledge as essential leadership qualities.

**42. Why Smart Executives Fail** *And What You Can Learn From Their Mistakes*

*Sydney Finkelstein* *New York, Portfolio* *2003 Pages 320*

A caution book for leadership, this lays a roadmap for leadership throwing insights into the factors that separate success from failure. Written in a lively manner.

**43. Leadership Theory and Practice**

*Peter G. Northhouse New Delhi, Response Books* *2003 Pages: 340*

Various theories of leadership are presented authoritatively by this communications professional ; but this is more than a textbook. Makes an interesting reading.

**44. The Heart and Soul of Leadership**

*Carolyn Barker, Robyn Coy (Ed.) New Delhi, Tata 2004, Pages: 206*

Divergent views presented here reflect the wider on-going debate about leadership in the Australian context. Throws insights into vital components of leadership.

**45. Leadership**

*Philip Sadler Kogan Page, New Delhi 2004, Pages : 195*

Sadler is independent in thinking and categorical in his expressions; he analyses styles of leaders, role models, qualities, behaviour and concepts of leadership.

**46. The 108 Skills of Natural Born Leaders**

*Warren Blank Mumbai, Magna 2004 P. 260*

With interesting references to business leaders this interprets theories and categorises the 108 skills under three heads, Foundational, Directional and Influential.

**47. A Bias for Action**

*Heike Bruch, Sumantra Ghoshal New Delhi Penguin-Viking 2004 Pages 212*

This book concentrates on two important leadership quotients – will power through energy and focus and time management, presenting real life instances.

**48. The many facets of Leadership**

*Marshal Goldsmith (Ed.) Pearson Education, New Delhi 2004 Pages: 414*

A collection of well-researched articles by experts, covering the issues behind the modern challenges for the corporate leader and the legacies of entrepreneurship.

**49. How to Change the World**

*David Bornstein New Delhi, Penguin 2005 Pages 320*

This is a book about hope, courage, and the power of extraordinary men and women who change the world welding idealism with hard-nosed pragmatism.

**50. Around the Corporate Campfire**

*Evelyn Clark New Delhi, Macmillan 2005 Pages: 232*

This is new wine in old bottle. The new crop of corporate writers and speakers wish to impress their audience through story telling technique to carry their message.

# Appendix 7

## Important Titles on Leadership - Categorised

(Including pre-2000 AD titles too- Alphabetised authorwise)

## General


Adair, John The Action-Centred Leader Mumbai, Jaico, 2004

Adair, John Inspiring Leadership, New Delhi, Viva Books, 2003

Adair, John -Peter Read Not Bosses But Leaders New Delhi, Kogen Page 2003

Allio, Robert J Leadership: Myths And Realities New Delhi, Tata McGraw Hill, 2000

Bennis, Warren An Invented Life: Reflection on Leadership and Change, Mumbai, Magna, 2003

Bennis, Warren On Becoming A Leader Mumbai, Magna, 2003

Bennis, Warren Managing The Dream Mumbai, Magna, 2003

Bennis, Warren & Burt Nanus, Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge New York, Harper Business, 1997

Beir, Peter, Mark Potts, The Leading Edge New Delhi, Tata 1989

Binz, Stanley Throwing the Elephant 2002 Harper Business, New York,

Blanchard, Kenneth, Hybols Bill, Hodges Phil Leadership By The Book London, Harper Collins,1999

Bornstein, David How to Change the World 2005 New Delhi, Penguin

Buckingham Marcus & Coffman, Curt First Break All The Rules, London, Simon & Schuster, 1991

Fisher, Rozer, Allen Sharp, Lateral Leadership London, Profile Books 2003

Frigon, Normand - Harry Jackson, The Leader 2000 Mumbai, Magna

Goleman, Daniel The New Leaders London, Little, Browne, 2002

Galford, Robert - Drapean Anne Seibold The Trusted Leader 2003 New York, The Free Press

Gipson, Rowan Rethinking the Future 2003, London, Nicholas Brealey

Goldsmith, Marshal, Vijay Govindarajan, Beverly Keye, Albert Vicere, The Many facets of Education Pearson Education 2004

Harvard Business Review on Leadership Boston, Harvard 1998

Heifetz, Ronald A Leadership Without Easy Answers 1996 Delhi, Universal

Horn, Art
Gifts of Leadership Team Building Through Focus & Empathy
1999 Macmillan -

Lippitt, Mary Burner The Leadership Spectrum 2003, Mumbai, Magna

Mathur, S.B. The A to Z Managerial Executive 2002, Delhi, Global Business Press

McLean, J.W. Weitzel William Leadership: Magic, Myth or Method 2001 Mumbai, Magna

Manz, Charles,C & Sims P. Jr., Henry New Super Leadership 2002 New Delhi, Viva

Northouse, Peter, G Leadership:Theory and Practice 2003 New Delhi, Response Books

Sadler, Philip Leadership 2004 New Delhi, Kogen Page

Smith, Perry M. Rules and Tools for Leaders 1999, Mumbai, Magna

Tichy, Noel The Leadership Engine 2002 New York, Harper

Tichy, Noel M., Cardwell, Nancy The Cycle of Leadership 2002 New York, Harper

Topping, Peter A Managerial Leadership 2002 New Delhi Tata Walters, Donald, J The Art of Supportive Leadership 1997 ...... Sterling

Ward, Jane Cranwell - Bacon, Andrea & Mackie Rosie Inspiring Leadership 2003 Singapore, Thomson Learning,

Zenger John, II & Folkman, Joseph The Extra-ordinary Leadership 2003, New Delhi, Tata

# Oriental

Backman, Michael & Charlotte Butler Big in Asia: 25 Strategies for Business Success New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003

Chakraborty, S.K., Debangshu Chakraborty, Leadership & Motivation-Cultural

Chakraborty, S.K., Pradip Bhattacharya (Ed.) Leadership and Power New Delhi, OUP 2001

Halley, George T,Chin Tiong Tan, Usha C Haley New Asian Emperors New Delhi Viva Books 1999

Hean-Tatt, Ong, Sin-Tian, Yap, Kawatani, Takashi Asian Winning Strategies for Modern Global Business 1997 Kuala Lumpur, Eastern Dragon Press

Jer Chen, Ming Inside Chinese Business 2001 Boston, Harvard Business School Press

Jones, Laurie Beth Jesus: CEO 1995 New York, Hyperion

Kamath, M.V. The Pursuit of Excellence 2003, New Delhi, Rupa

Krishna GR Indian Ethos for Modern Management 1999 New Delhi UBSPD

Kumar, Jagdish Ancient Wisdom and Modern Management 1994 New Delhi, UBS

Lala, R.M. In Search of Leadership 1999 New Delhi, Vision books

Legge, James (Tr.) The Wisdom of Confucius 2002 Kent, Grange Books

Liker K. Jeffrey The Toyota Way 2004, New Delhi, Tata

Menon, Jyothi The Power of Human Relations 2004 Pearson Education

Metcalf, Franz & Hartley B J Gallagher What Would Buddha Do at Work? 2003 New Delhi, Tata

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Sharma G.D. Management and the Indian Ethos 2001 New Delhi, Rupa

Malik, Pravir The Flowering of Management, 1997 Pondicherry, Aurobindo Institute

Sharma, Subhash
Management in New Age Western Windows Eastern Doors
1997 New Delhi, New Age

Vas, Luis, SR, Vas, Anita, SR Secrets of Leadership Insights from Panchatantra 2002 New Delhi Pustak Mahal

Singh, Anup J Managerial Wisdom Through Tales 1999, New Delhi, Excel

Singh, N. K. & Paul Omita Corporate Soul
1985 New Delhi, Vikas

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Barker, Carolyn & Robyn Coy (Ed.)
The 7 Heavenly Virtues of Leadership,
New Delhi, Tata McGraw Hill, 2003

Barker, Carolyn, Innovation and Imagination at Work
New Delhi Tata McGraw Hill, 2004

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Blanchard, Kenneth Leadership and the one-minute manager
New Delhi, Harper Collins & India Today, 2003

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Mumbai, Magna2004

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Penguin-Viking, 2004

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Maxwell, John C. The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership 1998 Nashville, Thomas Nelson

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Maxwell, John C. Be a People Person 2002 Mumbai, Magna

Gillen, Terry Leadership Skills for Boosting Performance, Mumbai, Jaico, 2004

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McCormack, Mark H Success Secrets 1989 Glasgow, Fantana/Collins

Landrum Gene N Eight Keys to Greatness How To Unlock Your Hidden Potential 1991, Mumbai, Magna

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Rossiter, Diane E. Leadership Skills 2003 New Delhi, Viva

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# Appendix 8

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Manikkam V.Sp. Valluvam (Chennai, Manivasagar Pathippakam, 1993)

Mu. Va. (Ed.) Tirukkural, Needhi Ilakkiyam (Madras, University of Madras, 1977)

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Subbaraman & Seyon Ikkaala Ulagirku Tirukkural Vol. I, II & III (Chennai, International Institute of Tamil Studies, 2004)

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# Appendix 9

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# Appendix 11

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Lee Iacocca, Mark McCormack and Rajaji find place in both the lists,

as they are authors and leaders.

# Appendix 12

## Leaders Referred to in the Thesis
(Alphabetised Index with Page Numbers)

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Lee Iacocca, Mark McCormack and Rajaji find place in both the lists,

as they are authors and leaders.